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CONTENTS

Lesson	Title	Scripture	Page
1.	The Crown-Jewel of Prophecy	Rev. 1	1
2.	Historical Setting	" 1	5
3.	The unveiling of Christ	" 1	9
4.	The Great Prophetic Drama	" 1	12
5.	Introduction and Dedication	" 1	16
6.	The Salutation	" 1	20
7.	Behold He Cometh	" 1	24
8.	The Introductory Vision	" 1	28
9.	The Glorified Christ	" 1	32
10.	The Ephesian Message	" 2	36
11.	Era of Waning Love	" 2	41
12.	Smyrna the Period of Persecution	" 2	45
13.	Pergamos the Epoch of State Religion	" 2	49
14.	Thyatira the Age of Papal Supremacy	" 2	53
15.	Sardis the Reformation Period	" 3	57
16.	The Era of Brotherly Love	" 3	62
17.	Laodicea the Period of Lukewarmness	" 3	66
18.	Christ's Last Message	" 3	70
19.	The Laodicean Remedy	" 3	74
20.	Standing at the Door	" 3	78
21.	The Vision of the Throne	" 4	82
22.	The Sea of Glass	" 4	86
23.	The Seven Seals	" 5	90
24.	Oratorios of Calvary	" 5	94
25.	The Symbolic Horsemen	" 6	98
26.	The Church of the Dark Ages	" 6	102
27.	Sixth and Seventh Seals	" 6	106
28.	The Sealing Message	" 7	110
29.	The Sealed Number	" 7	114
30.	The Innumerable Company	" 7	118
31.	The Seven Trumpets	" 8	124
32.	The Burning Mountain	" 8	128
33.	The Blazing Meteor	" 8	132
34.	The Symbolic Locusts	" 9	136
35.	The Tormenting Saracens	" 9	140
36.	The Ottoman Empire	" 9	144
37.	The Angel with the Little Book	" 10	150
38.	Measuring the Temple of God	" 11	154
39.	The Two Witnesses	" 11	160
40.	The Seventh Trumpet	" 11	166
41.	The Woman and Red Dragon	" 12	170
42.	War Between Michael and Lucifer	" 12	174
43.	The Wrath of the Dragon	" 12	178
44.	The Dragon's Last Attack	" 12	182
45.	The Beast with World Dominion	" 13	186
46.	The Head Wounded and Healed	" 13	191
47.	The False Prophet	" 13	196
48.	The Image of the Beast	" 13	201
49.	First-Fruits of Final Harvest	" 14	206
50.	The Judgment-Hour Message	" 14	212

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~~229~~
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51. The Third Angel's Message.................. Rev. 14 217
52. The Two Final Harvests.................... " 14 221
53. The Song of Triumph....................... " 15 225
54. The Seven Last Plagues.................... " 16 229
55. The War of Armageddon..................... " 16 233
56. Babylon the Great......................... " 17 238
57. The Queen of Nations...................... " 17 243
58. The Final Call Out of Babylon............. " 18 249
59. The Doom of Babylon....................... " 18 254
60. The Marriage of the Lamb.................. " 19 258
61. The Holy War.............................. " 19 263
62. Imprisonment of Satan..................... " 20 267
63. The Battle of Gog and Magog............... " 20 271
64. The Celestial City........................ " 21 275
65. The Kingdom of Glory...................... " 21 280
66. The Drama Ended........................... " 22 284

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STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

THE CROWN-JEWEL OF PROPHECY

1

Crowns Canon of Scripture. The Revelation is the last book of the Book of books; the last installment of God's love letter to man. It concludes and crowns the Biblical Canon. "The Apocalypse completes the Canon of Scripture; and with reverance be it said, the sacred canon would be imperfect without it."--Wordsworth. This last book is the final revelation which "crowns all Scripture with a crown of glory, and seals all inspiration with the seal of the living God." Stevens appropriately terms it "The Crown-jewel of Biblical Prophecy".

The Summary of Scripture. Not only does the Apocalypse complete the Biblical Canon but it is also a summary of the entire Bible. It is the epilogue of divine revelation in which the principal matters are recapitulated to emphasize their importance. "In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end."--A.A. 585. Of the 39 books of the Old Testament, 26 are quoted from in the Book of Revelation. In chapter 1 there are 27 references to 7 Old Testament books; 15 in chapter 2 to 10 books of the O.T.; 13 in chapter 3 to 10 O. T. books; 16 in chapter 4 to 9 O. T. books; and 14 in chapter 5 to 10 of the O. T. books. "Moses and John clasp hands across the space of 16 centuries, completing the testimony of God."-"The Vision of Patmos", Geo. W. Davis, p. 10.

The Promised Blessing. Rev. 1:3; 22:7. Of the 66 books of the Bible no other begins and ends with such a promise to the reader and hearer and doer. We may claim these beatitudes as we pursue our way through the book. The word "blessed" means: "Happy, joyful, blissful, beautified, hallowed, consecrated." This book places all who study and obey it in the very atmosphere of heaven and like Enoch they will walk with God. We can never know the loss sustained by neglecting its study. Bengel rebukes the church for their attitude towards the Revelation, declaring that they have reversed the promise making it read, "Blessed is he that readeth not."

Public Reading Indicated. Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear indicates public reading by the minister and an attentive attitude on the part of the audience. "Blessed is he who reads aloud."--Moffatt. "Blessed is the one reading and those hearing the words of this prophecy, and keeping the things which have been written in it."--Godbey's Translation. The reading and hearing and keeping are all in the present tense and mean a continual process, a repeated practice as a constant habit. Public reading was the custom of the time as but few copies of the Scriptures were available. This custom continued till the invention of printing multiplied the Scriptures so all could possess them and read and study for themselves. The custom of public reading of the Scriptures still prevails to some extent although it is no longer as necessary since the Bible is in almost every home.

Includes Private Study. It is evident from verse 11 that only one copy of the Apocalypse was written by John and it had to be passed from church to church and read to the congregation by the elders. The promised blessing must also include private reading and study in these days when printing has placed a copy in every home. The present neglect of public reading from this book is doubtless responsible in part for the little private reading and study given it. What if the Revelation is hard to understand and is filled with seeming mysteries? The blessing promised is unconditional on all who read and hear if they are willing to obey that which is made clear as fast as duty is revealed.

Obedience the Condition. Neither the reader nor the hearer can receive the blessing unless they "keep" or "Lay to heart" what is written. "Keeping strictly the things which have been written in it."--Emphatic Diaglott. Strict obedience to the light revealed is an important condition to receiving the blessing promised. See James 1:22; 2:12; Rom. 2:13; Matt. 7:24-29. Rev. Clemance in Pulpit Commentary tells how to keep the things recorded: "(1) Seize the principles of the book and abide in them. (2) Study its prophecies, and wait for them. (3) Learn its promises, and lean on them. (4) Ponder its precepts and obey them." The statement, "For the time is at hand", emphasizes the importance of immediate action and the danger of delay.

Promise Insures Knowledge. Such a promise would be meaningless unless the book can be understood. We cannot "keep" what is unknown and unknowable. "When the books of Daniel and the Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart. The Lord will bless all who will seek Him humbly and meekly to understand that which is revealed in the Revelation. This book contains so much that is large with immortality and full of glory that all who read and search it earnestly receive the blessing....One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation,- that the connection between God and His people is close and decided."--T.M. 114.

The Threatened Curse. Rev. 22:18,19. No other book of the Bible contains such a malediction on those who treat it unfairly. There are no non-essentials in it that need to be eliminated, and it is too complete to be improved by adding thereto. To read into it teachings that are not authorized, adds to it, and to lightly esteem or neglect as unimportant any part of the book places the guilty party under the threatened curse. This cannot mean that the writing of more Scripture would add to it for it is believed that John wrote his gospel after the Revelation. Not even a prophet has the right to alter that which he was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The curse includes "all who exalt their own opinions above divine revelation, all who change the plain meaning of Scripture to suit their own convenience."--G.C. 268.

A Last Day Book. "Behold I come quickly" is repeated three times in the last chapter and is given as a special reason for the promised blessing. Rev. 22:7. This last book was written especially for the remnant of the church living in the last days. It contains the instruction that prepares God's people for translation. It should therefore be of special interest to us. "To John the Lord opened the subjects that He saw would be needed by His people in the last days. The instruction that He gave is found in the book of Revelation. Those who would be co-workers with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will show a deep interest in the truths found in this book. With pen and voice they will strive to make plain the wonderful things that Christ came from heaven to reveal."--Vol. 8:301.

Demands Our Study. "As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the New Testament Scriptures is full of truths that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many, so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study."--C.O.L. 133; T.M. 116.

"The Book of Revelation...especially demands our study. Let every God-fearing teacher consider how most clearly to comprehend and to present the gospel that our Saviour came in person to make known to His servant John."--"Education", p. 191.

Diligent Study. "The closing scenes of this world's history are near at hand. The unfulfilled predictions of the book of Revelation are soon to be fulfilled. This prophecy is now to be studied with diligence by the people of God, and should be clearly understood. It does not conceal the truth; it clearly forewarns, telling us what will be in the future."--B-210-1903, Group D, p. 24.

"Time is short. The perils of the last days are upon us, and we should watch and pray, and study and heed the lessons that are given us in the books of Daniel and the Revelation....This is the education that is to be patiently given. Let our lessons be appropriate for the day in which we live, and let our religious instruction be given in accordance with the messages God sends....Those who accept positions as educators should prize more and more the revealed will of God so plainly and strikingly presented in Daniel and the Revelation."-Vol.6:128-131.

Occupy First Place. "The solemn messages that have been given in their order in the Revelation are to occupy the first place in the minds of God's people. Nothing else is to be allowed to engross our attention."--Vol. 8:302. We must confess that we have failed to give it first place in our study. Even with the remnant it is the neglected book of the Bible. We have too often left the interpretation to others and have failed to devote to it the deep personal study that it deserves and demands. "In the Revelation are portrayed the deep things of God."--A.A. 584. Its truths will not be discovered by the surface reader or revealed to the indolent student. "In your study of the word of God, penetrate deeper and still deeper beneath the surface."--Vol. 9:151. The most valuable nuggets are found deep down in the mine.

Results of Study. "When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival."--T.M. 113. "Dwell more on the Revelation. Read, explain, and enforce its teachings....If our people were half awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed in the Revelation, a reformation would be wrought in our churches and many more would believe the message."--Vol. 6:61,62. It is in the Revelation that we find the Laodicean message the acceptance of which brings the latter rain and loud cry. It is declared to be "The message on which the destiny of the church hangs."--E.W. 270.

Ever Increasing Light. Prov. 4:18. "A dawning light".-R.V. It is impossible to fully fathom the depths of divine revelation or exhaust its light. "It is impossible for any human mind to exhaust even one truth or promise of the Bible. One catches the glory from one point of view, another from another point; yet we can discern only gleamings. The full radiance is beyond our vision. As we contemplate the great things of God's word, we look into a fountain that broadens and deepens beneath our gaze. Its breadth and depth pass our knowledge. As we gaze the vision widens; stretched out before us we behold a boundless, shoreless sea."--"Education", p. 171.

Beware of Stagnation. "And no church can advance in holiness unless its members are earnestly seeking for truth as for hid treasure." --G.C. 522. "We cannot hold that a position once taken, an idea once advotated, is not, under any circumstances, to be relinquished." "Advance new principles, and crowd in clear-cut truth."--T.M. 105, 118. "But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures....When God's people are at ease and satisfied with their present enlightenment, we may be sure that He will not favor them. It is His will that they should be ever moving forward to receive the increasing and ever-increasing light which is shining for them. The present attitude of the church is not pleasing to God. There has come a self-confidence that has led them to feel no necessity for more truth and greater light....God wills that a voice be heard arousing His people to action."--Vol. 5:706-709.

No Inspired Commentary. While "Daniel and the Revelation" by Uriah Smith was the best commentary in its day on these two books, it was not infallible because its author did not write under prophetic inspiration nor did he claim to. The following was written in answer to the question, "Do you not think that these men who have brought out the truth in the past were inspired of God?"; "I dare not say that they were not led of God, for Christ leads into all truth; but when it comes to inspiration in the fullest sense of the word, I answer, No."--R.H. March 25, 1890. Angels stood by the side of Uriah Smith and the other pioneers as they spoke and wrote just as they stand by those today who are faithful in ministering the word. But no prophetically inspired commentary has ever been written on the book of Revelation and it still contains floods of light for the diligent seeker after truth.

Memory Text: Rev. 1:3.

HISTORICAL SETTING

2

The Author. Rev. 1:1,2. While this book, like all Scripture, had its origin with God the Father, the author and fountain of all light and truth, and was given to the world through Jesus Christ who is the only mediator between God and man, the human instrument or writer was John. There has been some dispute as to whether this refers to John the apostle or some other John, but the weight of authority is in favor of the former. Four times the writer designates himself "John" or "His servant John". Paul, Peter, James and the other apostles used the same expression indicating that they were servants in a sense not common to believers in general.

Writer Identified. The writer not only took it for granted that his readers would identify him as the only John among the disciples, but he also declares that he had before born witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. v. 2. "This is the John who taught the truth concerning the Word of God and the truth told us by Jesus Christ--a faithful account of what he had seen."-Weymouth. Both the internal and external evidence proves that "the disciple whom Jesus loved" was the author of the Revelation. There are many similar expressions in the five books and there are more than 20 texts showing a striking resemblance. "I conclude, therefore, upon the solid basis of God's own identification of the author of this book, that it was the apostle John who wrote it."-"The Apocalypse", J. A. Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 29.

Date Written. Authorities are also somewhat divided regarding the date the book was written. Some believe it was written in A. D. 69 during the reign and persecution of the Emperor Nero but the weight of evidence is in favor of A. D. 96 during the reign of Domitian. Nero's persecutions of the Christians were confined to the city of Rome and John lived in Ephesus in Asia Minor and he declared himself to be a "companion in tribulation" with the other believers in Asia. "A partaker with you in the tribulation"- R. V. v. 9. The persecution, therefore, that sent John into exile was more universal than that of Nero. The Emperor Domitian reigned from 81 to 96 A. D. He carried on the second of those ten bloody persecutions by which pagan Roman emperors attempted to destroy Christianity and thus preserve the gods and religion of Rome. Christianity was outlawed as a form of treason against the Roman government.

John was Banished. in the year 94 and probably received and wrote his visions in the latter part of 95 and early in 96 A.D. According to Tertullian he was taken to Rome for trial and as a punishment was "plunged into burning hot oil without being hurt and then banished to an island". (De Praeser. Haer. 36). "John was accordingly summoned to Rome to be tried for his faith...John answered for himself in a clear and convincing manner, and with such simplicity and candor that his words had a powerful effect. His hearers were astonished at his wisdom and eloquence. But the more convincing his testimony, the deeper was the hatred of his opposers. The emperor Domitian was filled with rage.

He could neither dispute the reasoning of Christ's faithful advocate, nor match the power that attended his utterance of truth; yet he determined that he would silence his voice. John was cast into a cauldron of burning oil; but the Lord preserved the life of His faithful servant, even as He preserved the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace."--A.A. 569, 570.

Place Written. v. 9. Patmos is a small island in the Aegaean Sea about 50 miles southwest of the site of ancient Ephesus. It is a mass of barren rocks, dark in color and cheerless in form. It has neither trees nor rivers and the only land that can be cultivated are a few little nooks between the ledges of rocks. The island is about eight miles in length and between one and two in width and a little more than 20 in circumference. The 1929 atlas indicates that it now belongs to Greece with a population of 4000 or 5000 mostly miners and fishermen. It is also known as Palmosa or Palmos. In the side of its highest mountain is a cave or grotto where tradition says John lived and received his visions. There can be no question but John wrote the Revelation on the Island of Patmos where the visions were given. x 12 times he was told to write what he had seen. Rev. 10:4 indicates that he wrote the book as the successive visions were given.

Manuscripts. There are about 120 Greek manuscripts of the Apocalypse known to Biblical scholars, the earliest belonging to the fourth century. There are doubtless many others in private libraries. The 120 are in the great public libraries of the old world. There are ten times as many manuscripts of all the other New Testament books. The few manuscripts on this book would indicate that the Revelation was little understood and used by the early church and therefore but few copies were made. The book was written especially for the last days and not until then would it be understood and appreciated.

Cause of Banishment. v. 9. John was banished because he was a witness for Christ in the preaching of the gospel. Dr. John Lord declared that "It is the fate of prophets to suffer persecution and martyrdom." Christ prophesied that such would be the experience of His disciples. Matt. 23:34-36. This prediction was literally fulfilled. His forerunner, John the Baptist, was beheaded. Christ himself was scourged and crucified; Stephen was stoned; James was beheaded by Herod Agrippa; Philip was scourged, imprisoned and crucified; Matthew was killed with a halbred (ax on end of spear); James the Less was stoned and his brains dashed out with a fullers club; Matthias was stoned at Jerusalem and then beheaded; Andrew was crucified at Edessa; Mark was dragged to pieces by an enfuriated mob on the streets of Alexandria; Peter was crucified, head downward at his own request; Paul was beheaded at Rome by order of Nero; Jude, the brother of James and also called Thaddeus, was crucified at Edessa; Bartholomew was beaten and crucified; Thomas was thrust through with a spear in Parthia; Luke was hanged on an olive tree in Greece; Simon Zelotes was crucified in Britian; and John was banished to Patmos and was the only one who died a natural death. See "Fox's Book of Martyrs." pp. 16-18.

The Portion of the Godly. 2 Tim. 3:12. Satan never persecutes his own citizens, nor does he afflict lukewarm Christians. It was the godliness of the early Christians that brought on them the wrath of the great Adversary. This explains why persecution now slumbers. "Why is it then, that persecution seems in a great degree to slumber? The only reason is, that the church has conformed to the world's standard, and therefore awakens no opposition. The religion which is current in our day is not of the pure and holy character that marked the Christian faith in the days of Christ and His apostles. It is only because of the spirit of compromise with sin, because the great truths of the word of God are so indifferently regarded, because there is so little vital godliness in the church, that Christianity is apparently so popular with the world. Let there be a revival of the faith and power of the early church, and the spirit of persecution will be revived, and the fires of persecution will be rekindled."--G.C. 48.

A Blessing in Disguise. The more the Israelites were persecuted by the Egyptians "the more they multiplied and grew." Ex. 1:12. Thus it has ever been. The ten pagan Roman persecutions of the early church were terrible beyond description but during that period Christianity made its greatest progress. By the end of the first century it is estimated that there were six million Christians and by the close of the third century when the persecution ceased Christianity supplanted paganism as the religion of the empire. The first gospel seeds were watered by the blood of martyrs and bountiful was the harvest. Tertullian wrote to a Roman ruler: "Kill us, torture us, condemn us, grind us to dust; the oftener we are mown down by you the more in numbers we grow. The blood of the Christian is seed."--"Apology", par. 50. This was again repeated during the persecutions of the Dark Ages and will be again just before the return of Christ. Rev. 7: 13, 14.

Patmos a Roman Penitentury. Banishment was one of Rome's chief modes of punishment and islands were often used as places of confinement to make it more difficult for criminals to escape. There were two degrees of punishment determined on the basis of social and political rank. (1) Prisoners of wealth and high political and social standing were given an allowance and were accorded the freedom of the island. They were not compelled to labor and could work for hire. (2) The lot of the common prisoner was very severe. They were condemned to hard labor for life with scanty and poor food. They were clothed in rags and compelled to sleep on the hard floor or ground and were allowed but few privileges. They soon died under the strain or sank to the level of the beasts. It was a condition of hopeless despair. Speaking of the impossibility of escape Gibbon said: "But the empire of the Roman's filled the world, and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies....To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire," Vol. 1, chap. 3, p. 133.

The Lot of Christians. Christians shared the fate of the common prisoner and John was their "companion in tribulation." Tradition says that John was compelled to labor in the mines on the island. With no apparent hope of ever again seeing his home in Ephesus or visiting the churches of his love and care, the book of Revelation was, as it were, "his last will and testament." The sudden assassination of Domitian in A. D. 96, unexpectedly ended the banishment of John, for Nerva, the new emperor, released all the prisoners of Domitian. John was again privileged to visit the churches of Asia and he served them faithfully for several years before his death.

The Crown of Scripture. Out of a Roman penitentury came the Apocalypse to bless the world. From the barren masses of the volcanic hills of Patmos came the book that completes and crowns the canon of Scripture. While his only earthly companions were criminals, John did not become discouraged and lose hope but rose above circumstances and environments. He kept in touch with heaven and held communion with heavenly beings. We should thank God for the bleak and barren places of life that cut us off from earthly help so that heaven can draw near. Lonly Patmos became to John "the house of God" and "the gate of heaven". A monastery now crowns the summit of the most central height of Patmos where tradition says John received some of his visions. It was built eight centuries ago and dedicated to "Saint John".

Out of Exile. From the place of exile and persecution has come the lives and literature and music that have been the greatest blessing to mankind. While in exile facing the wrath of his brother Esau, Jacob in his extremity found God and his character was so transformed that he was given a new name to correspond with his new character. It was while Joseph was an exile in Egypt that he developed a character that gave him the blessings of heaven and the favor of Pharoah and made him the saviour of the nation and of his own people. Moses was in exile when he met and talked with God at the burning bush and received his commission to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage. While a fugitive from the wrath of Pharoah Moses wrote the books of Genesis and Job.

Out of the Dark. The experience of David while fleeing from the wrath of Saul brought to him the greatest blessings of his life. It was during the time that he was a fugitive that he produced the best and most spiritual of the Psalms. Elijah was in exile fleeing from the angry Jezebel when he heard the "still small voice" directing him to his last work which culminated in his translation. Ezekial and Daniel wrote their great prophecies while in Babylonian captivity. Tyndale and Luther produced their Bible translations while fugitives from the wrath and power of papal Rome. Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" came out of Bedford's jail to bless the world. In the dark room of persecution and tribulation the greatest characters have been developed and the greatest literature produced. Such also is the noble heritage of the book of Revelation.

Memory Text: Rev. 1:1.

THE UNVEILING OF CHRIST

3

The Title. Rev. 1:1. "Revelation" is the English for the Greek word Apokalypsis which in its Anglicised form is Apocalypse. This was the only title ever given this book before the 11th century as indicated by all MSS. This is the only book of the Bible divinely named. The name, "The Revelation of St. John the divine", as given by the translators is a contradiction of the inspired title as revealed in the first verse. The use of the word "divine" in connection with religious leaders seems to have originated with Eusebius or at least in his day. Recent archeological discoveries in the ruins of Ephesus show that "divine" was one of the titles of the pagan priests of the temple of Artemis or Diana. Like many other pagan practices it came into the church during the apostasy.

The Unveiling. Revelation is defined as "the act of revealing; disclosure of what was before unknown; also that which is revealed." An apocalypse is something disclosed, unveiled, discovered, brought to light; "the act of removing, turning back, or taking off the veil so as to discover what previously was hidden from view." It conveys the idea of the drawing aside of the curtain of concealment. If a curtain be drawn aside the scene behind it becomes clearly exposed to view and that which was hidden becomes visible. For this reason the Concordant Version reads, "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ."

Not Sealed. The contents of this book are not concealed; they are revealed, unfolded, made known. The angel instructed John not to seal the book. See Rev. 22:10. We must conclude that the prophet followed this instruction. The popular idea that the book of Revelation is sealed and cannot be understood is refuted (1) by the title; (2) by the promised blessing on all who read, hear, and keep what is written in it; (3) by the instruction to "seal not"; and (4) by the oft repeated injunction to "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches", which is seven times repeated. If sealed it would have been called "The Apocrypha" which means just the opposite of "Apocalypse". An apocrypha is something "hidden, obscure, unknown, veiled, etc." Or its title would have been "The Mystery", "The Sealed Book", "The Enigma", "The Sphinx of the Bible" or "The Book of Hidden Secrets".

Reason Neglected. The belief that this book is sealed is the chief reason why it is the neglected book of the Bible and also the principal excuse used for not studying it. This is a fulfillment of prophecy. Isa. 29:11,12. A portion of the book of Daniel is the only part of the Scriptures ever sealed and that only till "the time of the end". Dan. 12:4,9. It has long since been unsealed and given to the world. Its final mysteries were unlocked by the message of 1828-1844 which made clear the 2300-day prophecy and revealed the true light on the sanctuary question. Notwithstanding all the internal and external evidence that Revelation is an open book, many still persist in declaring it to be sealed and unknown and unknowable. Archbishop Benson asked a friend what impression the Apocalypse made on his mind. The answer was: "Chaos". Another said: "The study of Revelation either finds or leaves a man mad." And still another declared it to be "a dark and inexplicable hieroglyphic, which it is humility and duty to leave unopened."

The Proper Attitude. "Let none think, because they cannot explain the meaning of every symbol of the Revelation, that it is useless for them to search this book in an effort to know the meaning of the truth it contains. The One who revealed these mysteries to John will give to the diligent searcher for truth a foretaste of heavenly things. Those whose hearts are open to the reception of truth will be enabled to understand its teachings."--A.A. 584, 585.

Unveiling of Christ. The Revelation is more than a prophecy given by Christ; it is a revelation or unveiling of Him. "This is the unveiling of a Person,--Jesus Christ,--and not merely a prediction revealed through Him."--Footnote of Concordant Version. To reveal or unveil Christ to mankind is the purpose of all prophecy and especially of the last book of the Bible. The other books partly unveil Him but it takes the Revelation to complete the unveiling that fully reveals Him to the church and world. The entire Bible could appropriately be called the revelation or unveiling of Jesus Christ for that is the purpose of the gospel.

Purpose of Scriptures. Amos 3:7. Christ is the chief secret of all prophecy. Its chief purpose is to reveal Him. 2 Pet. 1:19. This was the purpose of the lamb offered by Abel; of the test to Abraham on Mt. Moriah; and of the whole sacrificial system of the Mosaic services. See John 5:39,40,46; Luke 24:24-27. It was the revelation of Christ in Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost that brought conviction to 3000 sinners. This has been the theme of every Bible writer. The name "Jesus" appears more than 1000 times in the New Testament and "Christ" more than 500 times. The Emancipation Proclamation has been so written that as it is being read the face of its author, Abraham Lincoln, becomes visible on the face of the document. To the spiritually discerning every page of Scripture reveals its divine Author.

The Name of Jesus or its equivalent pronouns is found 49 times in the first chapter of Revelation, 39 in the second, and 49 in the third, or, a total of 137 in the first three chapters. 26 times He is called the "Lamb of God" which is more than in all other Scriptures combined. To understand the book we must look for the Man of the book. To look for events predicted only, is to fail in meeting its purpose. Dr. Gordon tells how he gave his little son a puzzle map of the United States. The father was surprized that the map was so soon successfully put together. He asked the boy how he had done it so soon. The boy turned the map over and showed him a large picture of Uncle Sam covering the entire back of the map. He had put the man together and in doing so had solved the puzzle. If we keep our eyes on Jesus we can understand the secrets of the Revelation. This is the reason so many fail to understand or appreciate the Bible.

x The Crowning Revelation. The Old Testament reveals Christ in prophecy; the gospels reveal Him in His earthly life, ministry, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension; the Acts and epistles reveal the early triumphs of the church under His Holy Spirit ministry. The story would be incomplete without the revelations of the closing book. Here Christ is pictured in glory, at the right hand of God as the High Priest and Minister of the heavenly sanctuary. He is also pictured as the supreme Judge before whom all nations must appear for judgment. The final scene describes Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords reigning forever over the saints in Paradise restored. The Revelator performs the final unveiling ceremony that makes possible an unobstructed view of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. One writer calls it: "A panorama of the glory of Christ." Genesis begins with Paradise lost and the fall of man, and Revelation ends with man redeemed and Paradise restored.

Revealed in Events. The Apocalypse is not only a revelation of Christ in person but also in world events. He is the Maker and Preserver of all mankind. He is the "prince of the kings of the earth" and "ruleth in the kingdoms of men". We should be able to see His stately steppings in human history and in current events. In one sense He is in all events that fulfill His word and lead toward the fulfillment of his eternal purpose. He speaks to man through events and judgments. They are His messages and they reveal Him. Thus a knowledge of His word makes it possible to see Jesus in the news items of the daily press.

The World's Greatest Need. To behold Jesus is the supreme need of the world. Many have grown weary of the poor imitations in the lives of His followers and long to see the genuine. Like the Greeks who came to the disciples they are saying to every professed Christian: "Sirs we would see Jesus." Such a vision has mighty transforming power. It changes character. 2 Cor. 3:18. It was such a vision that made Moses the meekest man on earth and yet the greatest. See Heb, 11:26,27. Job's captivity was turned by such a vision, Job 42:5,6,10. The proud Pharasee, Saul of Tarsus, was transformed into the meek and humble Paul by a vision of Jesus and he was never "disobedient to the heavenly vision." "At the gate of Damascus the vision of the crucified One changed the whole current of his life."--"Education" 65. This is the greatest need of this proud, haughty age. X

New Visions of Christ. "To the apostle John on the Isle of Patmos were revealed the things which God desired him to give to the people. Study these revelations. Here are themes worthy of our contemplation, large and comprehensive lessons which all the angelic host are seeking to communicate. Behold the life and character of Christ, and study His meditorial work. Here is infinite wisdom, infinite love, infinite justice, infinite mercy. Here are depths and heights, lengths and breadths, for our consideration. Numberless pens have been employed in presenting to the world the life, the character, and the meditorial work of Christ, and yet every mind through which the Holy Spirit has worked, has presented these themes in a light that is fresh and new."--Vol. 6:59.

Memory Text: Rev. 22:10.

THE GREAT PROPHETIC DRAMA

4

Mediums of Revelation. Rev. 1:1. (1) The Eternal, Jehovah the Father. The fountain and origin of all light and truth. (2) Jesus Christ, Jehovah's channel of communication with the world. He is the "Word of God", the spokesman of the godhead, the only Medium or Mediator between heaven and earth. He was the ladder of Jacob's dream. John 1:51. "Which God gave to Him" indicates that He still receives His revelations from the Father as while on earth. See John 5:19,30; 8:28; 14:10; 17:8. (3) The Holy Spirit. 2:7. The third Person of the Godhead who has given inspiration to all the prophets. 2 Peter 1:21. (4) "His angel", who was doubtless Gabriel, the angel of prophecy, who was used by the Holy Spirit in revealing prophecy to Daniel. "It was Gabriel, 'His angel', whom Christ sent to open the future to the beloved John."--D.A. 234.

Human Agencies. (5) John was the prophet or human instrument, the scribe or amenuensis, who did the writing. He is designated "His servant John" and was commissioned to pass the revelation on to Christ's other servants in the churches. Only servants of Christ can understand and appreciate the Revelation for to them it was given and dedicated. (6) The last agency in reaching mankind with the gospel of salvation is the church, the organized believers. See v. 4,11. By the church the revelations of God to man are to be proclaimed to the ends of the earth. This has ever been God's method. It indicates a great system of organization giving to every man and angel a part in carrying out the purposes of God. Every recipient of His mercy is a "debtor" to every person lost in sin. See Rom. 1:14.

Method of Revelation. "Signified":-"To make signs or tokens; to signify by symbols." The "things" or coming events of the Revelation are revealed in signs and symbols; its prophecies are symbolic. "To shew" also indicates a panoramic method of unveiling coming events. It is the companion book to Daniel and the two should be studied together. "Daniel is the key to Revelation, and Revelation is the key to Daniel. Both are complete together; divided they are incomprehensible."--"The Vision of Patmos", Geo. W. Davis, The language of both is highly figurative requiring great care in the interpretation of its symbols. The Bible is its own best interpreter and commentary.

Prophetic Cartoons. In these two books, events, conditions, nations, and religious movements and organizations are represented by prophetic cartoons. One writer declared that "the Revelation is a vast picture gallery." The language of the Apocalypse is also highly dramatic. It is written in the style of a play or drama as if the various scenes were acted out before the prophet on a stage or were thrown on the screen in a great moving picture. We will explain the various symbols and scenes as acts in a great drama. The Apocalypse is "The Great Prophetic Drama of the Revelation of Jesus Christ". It is a drama of life and death in which we are actors. "For we are made a spectacle (theatre, mar.) unto the world, and to angels, and to men." --1 Cor. 4:9.

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Why Employ Symbols? Matt. 13:10,11,13,34,35. Parable:-"A thing darkly or figuratively expressed, a figure or similitude." This must include the figures and symbols of the Revelation. In a special sense it is a book of parables in which are uttered "things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." The parable method of teaching was very popular in Christ's day and was used by Him to conceal the truth from His enemies and at the same time reveal it to His disciples. He was constantly hounded by spy enemies. He had to cease the use of plain language and speak in parables to keep His work from being cut short. Jesus could proclaim great truths and administer severe rebukes in parables and His enemies could not use it against Him. See Matt. 21:33-46. The Prophet Nathan's parable message to king David is another illustration of the value of parables. See 2 Sam. 12.

Especially Necessary in Prophecy. Bible prophecy, especially in Daniel and the Revelation, pictures the great earthly powers to be used by Satan in making war on the church of Christ in the future down to the very end. These forecasts must be clothed in parabolic language and given in symbols in order to protect them from the wrath of the enemies described therein and to preserve them to the church in all future ages. Had John named Pagan Rome in his Apocalypse instead of describing it in symbols, his book would never have reached the churches or survived the persecutions. If symbols had not been employed to describe the Papacy and its work the Bible might not have lived through the Dark Ages. False Protestantism today would not be so careful to print and circulate the Bible if the symbols used to describe it were understood. We should be thankful that symbols were employed that the word of God might be preserved to the end of time. Luther found a Bible preserved in a monastery and used it as the weapon to break the power of its preservers and usher in a new day of religious freedom.

Value of Parables. "But now let us ask...why the Lord Jesus used parables in His discourses. And to that we may answer, first of all, that He employed this form of instruction as a means of attracting attention....But another reason...was to prevent His auditors from being repelled by a too sudden revelation, either of His purpose or His message. He had to reveal His truth to men 'as they were able to bear it'. In the third place He employed parables to stimulate inquiry." "Parable was the veil which Jesus put over the face of truth, to secure its safe perception to those who listen to His words....Parable was a veil which both revealed and concealed the truth...To those who had the spirit to discern, the outward covering brought the truth nearer, but to those who lacked that spirit, there was nothing but the story."--"The Parables of Our Lord", William M. Taylor, pp. 7-12.

Col. 23

To Reveal Message of God in Nature. "So wide was Christ's view of truth, so extended His teaching, that every phase of nature was employed in illustrating truth. The scenes upon which the eye daily rests were all connected with some spiritual truth, so that nature is clothed with the parables of the Master." "Natural things were the medium for the spiritual; the things of nature and the life-experience of His hearers were connected with the truth of the written word. Leading thus from the natural to the spiritual kingdom, Christ's parables are links in the chain of truth that unites man to God, and earth with heaven.... In the days of Christ these lessons had been lost sight of. Men had well-nigh ceased to discern God in His works."--C.O.L. 20,17,18. See also pp.21,22 for other reasons.

....

Only Spiritually Discerned Can Understand. Christ dedicated the book to "His servants" and there is no promise of understanding to others. Dan. 12:10. Here is doubtless the secret of the present ignorance regarding the Apocalypse. See also Mark 4:10-12; Matt.11:25;1Cor.2:14. Spiritual things are foolishness to the unspiritual. The Chinese and Japanese characters are foolishness and meaningless to those who cannot read them but full of meaning to those who can. The ancient hieroglyphics were meaningless to the greatest students of the world till an alphabet was worked out from the Rosetta Stone giving them vast importance. Some laugh at the idea of beasts and birds being used in the Bible to represent nations and at the same time speak reverently of the American Eagle, the British Lion and the Chinese Dragon. We know now that the winged lion was the symbol of Babylon in the days of Daniel.

Land of Living Streams. "The whole Bible is a revelation of the glory of God in Christ....Other literature is of little value when compared with this. The mind that is earthly finds no pleasure in contemplating the word of God; but for the mind renewed by the Holy Spirit, divine beauty and celestial light shine from the sacred page. That which to the earthly mind was a desolate wilderness, to the spiritual mind becomes a land of living streams."--Vol.8:319,320. Those who enter the portals ofthe Apocalypse laden with sin will have a slow and laborious journey; will discern little of its celestial beauty, and will be none the wiser when they reach the final exit.

"Life of Christ", Neander, pp.106,107: "The form of His expressions whether He uttered parables, proverbs, maxims, or apparent paradoxies, was intended to spur men's minds to profounder thought, to awaken the divine consciousness within, and so teach them to understand that which at first served only as a mental stimulus....The form of teaching repelled the stupid and passed unheeded and misunderstood by the unholy, roused susceptible minds to deeper thought, and rewarded their inquiries by the discovery of ever increasing treasures.... So far as they hungered for true spiritual food, so far as the parable stimulated them to deeper thought, and so far only it revealed new riches....And so, in proportion to the susceptibility of His hearers, the parables of Christ revealed sacred things to some, and veiled them from others, who were destined through their own fault, to remain in darkness....The parables served to sift and purge the throng of Christ's hearers." This is the purpose of the Revelation and the result of its study.

All Depends on our Attitude. The Lord is no respector of persons and in the judgment all will be without excuse. See Rom.1:19-21. But as free moral agents we must make the choice. John 1:9,12 Light comes to all, but only those who receive Christ as a personal Saviour will be saved. "Every truly honest soul will come to the light of truth."--G. C. 522. "To minds that were open to the Holy Spirit, the significance of the Saviour's teaching unfolded more and more. Mysteries grew clear, and that which had been hard to grasp became evident....In parables He rebuked the hypocracy and wicked works of those who occupied high positions and in figurative language clothed truth of so cutting a character that had it been spoken in direct denunciation, they would not have listened to His words, and would speedily have put an end to His ministry. But while He evaded the spies, He made truth so clear that error was manifested, and the honest in heart were profited by His lessons. Divine wisdom, Infinite grace, were made plain by the things of God's creation."--C.O.L. 21,22. To the honest in heart only are the blessings promised and is salvation assured.

Scriptures Preserved. Ps. 12:6,7. "As an educating power, the Bible is without a rival....The Bible is the most instructive history that men possess. It came fresh from the fountain of eternal truth, and a divine hand has preserved its purity through all the ages."--P.P.596. We need not worry that Jesuit or modernistic influences will be permitted to tarnish the purity of divine revelation. One of the greatest factors in the preservation of the Scriptures has been the use of signs, symbols and parables by which truth has been hidden from the ungodly and revealed to the Christians as it is needed or becomes meat in due season. The Scriptures release light as it becomes applicable. It is thus that "the path of the just" shines with an increasing brilliancy "unto the perfect day." Prov. 4:18

Last Day Light. The last book of the Bible was written especially for the last days and will be the last to release its light. "The revelation made to John on the isle of Patmos....from the opening of the first chapter to the close of the last chapter is light, great light, revealed to us by Jesus Christ."--T.M.433

"Different periods in the history of the church have each been marked by the development of some special truth, adapted to the necessities of God's people at that time. Every new truth has made its way against hatred and opposition; those who were blessed with its light were tempted and tried. The Lord gives special truth for the people in an emergency....They cannot remain silent, except at the peril of their souls. Christ's ambassadors have nothing to do with consequences. They must perform their duty, and leave results with God."--G.C. 609,610. The last period of church history is here and the last message of mercy and warning to the church and to the world must be fearlessly proclaimed regardless of consequences. These messages upon which the destiny of the church and of the world hang are revealed in the Apocalypse as in no other book.

Memory Text: Rev. 1:4

INTRODUCTION AND DEDICATION

5

Introduction. Rev. 1:1-3 is known as the introduction, foreword, or superscription of the book. Every book has an introduction or preface to the main work, a brief summary, giving some preliminary information regarding the author, the book, and the purpose of its publication. This introduction contains the title of the book, its divine origin, the mediums of its revelations, the name and identify of the writer, the manner in which it is revealed, the purpose of its publication, and the promised blessings to the reader, hearers and doers.

Prophecy of Coming Events. Not only is the Apocalypse a revelation of Jesus Christ in person, but it is also a revelation of "things" or events "which must shortly come to pass". These events, however, all focus on Christ. William A. Sunday said: "I ascended to the observatory of the prophets, where appeared photographs of far-off events and stars all focused upon one great Star which was to arise as an atonement for sin." It is a revelation of Christ in His relation to events and the future history of the world. The statement, "for the time is at hand" is "as if He had said; In a short time the train of these visions will be put in motion."—Dr. Adam Clarke.

More than a Prophecy. v. 19. The Apocalypse is a revelation of the past, present and future. The prophecies of Daniel were all of future events. While the Apocalypse is the greatest panorama of prophetic history ever written, it also reaches back to the very beginning of sin and picturesits sad history. It reveals "things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." It describes the revolt of Lucifer, the war in heaven that cast Lucifer out of his high official position in the government of God, and the incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. "The things which are", doubtless refer to events then transpiring and conditions then prevailing. Future events are spoken of as: "What is about to occur after this."—Concordant. "The things which are about to take place after these."—Godbey's Translation.

A Book of Contrasts. "The word of God abounds in sharp and striking contrasts. Sin and holiness are placed side by side, that, beholding, we may shun the one and accept the other....We are left free to copy either, as we choose. The fearful results of transgressing God's commands are placed over against the blessings resulting from obedience. We ourselves must decide whether we will suffer the one or enjoy the other."—P.K. 676. This is especially true of the Revelation. It pictures sad conditions in the churches that must be remedied in order to point to Christ as the only remedy. Apostasy is graphically described in order to place the greater emphasis on loyalty. It pictures terrible war scourges as the aftermath of rejecting the overtures of the Prince of Peace. The antichrist is placed in contrast with the true Christ; the false prophet with the faithful messengers of truth; the harlot woman symbolic of the church of Satan with the virgin representing the church of Christ. Satan's final world message is described as an incentive to accept God's final world message.

The Dedication. v. 4,11. All books are dedicated to a person, organization, institution, or to the general public. The Apocalypse is dedicated to the seven churches of the Roman province of Asia. "Roman Asia"--20th Century N.T. "In the Province of Asia"-Weymouth. This was only a small part of Asia Minor about the size of the state of Pennsylvania. The book is not dedicated to cities, provinces or nations, but to the church and its members. Only children of the kingdom can grasp its secrets for to them it was dedicated. Daniel alone could read and interpret the handwriting on the wall of Belshazzar's palace.> Only those who walk and work with God can read His hand-writing.< To the spiritual discerners the book of Revelation becomes "a land full of fountains and springs and wells, out of which flows the river which makes glad the city of God."

Why Dedicated to Only Seven? There were many more churches even larger than these, at Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, etc. In the Province of Asia there were many other churches. There were churches at Troas, Assos, Miletus, Colosse, and in many other cities and villages. It is evident that these seven were chosen as representatives of all. Seven is the sacred number of the Bible and especially of Revelation. It contains a sacred arithmetic as well as a record of sacred persons, times and places. Numbers in the Scriptures are as significant as words. Revelation is a book of sevens. Seven visions, letters, churches, stars, candlesticks, spirits of God, lamps of fire, seals, trumpets, horns, eyes, thunders, heads, crowns, angels, vials, mountains, etc.

Symbol of Completeness. "The number seven in the Scriptures denote something universal and complete."--Luther. It signifies fullness, completeness, and perfection. It stands for universality and unity in variety. Since the Creation when the weekly cycle of seven days was instituted to divide time and guard the Sabbath, seven has been a sacred number. "The evidence of this reaches back to the very beginning. We meet it first in the hallowing of the seventh day in pledge and token of the covenant of God with man, as indeed in the binding up of seven in the very word Sabbath."--Trench on the Seven Epistles. (Archbishop of the Church of England).

The Universal Church. "The seven must be regarded as constituting a complex whole--as possessing an ideal completeness. Christ, we feel sure, could not have placed himself in the relation which He does to them,--as holding in His hand the seven stars, walking among the seven golden candlesticks, these stars being the angels of the churches, and the candlesticks the churches themselves,--unless they ideally represented and set forth, in some way or other, the universal church militant here upon earth."--Trench on the Seven Epistles, p. 44. Just as seven spirits are used to represent the Holy Spirit in the fullness and completeness of His office, powers and operations, so the seven churches represent the one universal church in its complete being and history from the time of the vision to the end of probation.

Covers Christian Era. "Under this emblematical representation of the seven churched of Asia, the Holy Spirit has delineated seven different states of the Christian church, which would appear in succession, extending to the coming of our Lord, and the consummation of all things."--Cited in "The Comprehensive Commentary", Edited by William Jenks. "The seven churches stand for the entire church, the complete society of professing Christians, the church universal, in the whole of its membership and the entireness of its earthly condition and career."--"The Apocalypse", Joseph A. Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 130.

Portrayal outline depict
describe sketch
Picture trace

In Seven Periods. "The seven churches represent seven phases or periods in the church's history, stretching from the time of the apostles to the coming again of Christ, the characteristics of which are set forth partly in the names of these churches, but more fully in the epistles addressed to them."--Id. p. 142. Sir William Ramsey in his "Letters to the Seven Churches" says: "There were seven groups of churches in Asia, each group represented by one outstanding and conspicuous member; these representatives are seven churches. These seven representative churches stand for the church of the province, and the church of the province in its turn, stands for the entire church of Christ." A careful study of the map will show the strength of this argument.

Other Writers. "It will seem that the seven churches besides their literal respect, were intended to be as patterns and types of the several ages of the catholic church from the beginning thereof unto the end of the world...according to the several ages thereof, answering the pattern of the seven churches here."--Mede's Work, Book V, chap. 10, p. 90.

"The epistles to the seven churches, besides describing what is undoubtedly historical, have so many allusions which are evidently figurative and mystical that there is the strongest reason for accepting the view advanced by Mede, one of the earliest Protestant Apocalyptic commentators, and received by many later expositors, that it was intended that those seven churches should prophetically sample (show) us a seven-fold temper and constitution of the whole church according to the several ages thereof answering the pattern of the churches named here."--"Behold He Cometh", A.J.Gordon, pp. 66,67.

Universal Interpretation. This was the view of Victorinus and Tichaenius of the 4th century; Arethas and Primasius of the 6th; and More, Girdestone and many others of a later period. "It is the opinion of very learned writers upon this book, that our Lord, by these seven churches, signifies all the churches of Christ to the end of the world; and by what He saith to them, designs to show what shall be the state of the churches of all ages, and what their duty is."--"Annotations Upon the Holy Bible", Matthew Pool, Vol. III, p. 952. The seven epistles of Christ are therefore of as universal application as the epistles of Paul to the seven churches of Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica. All agree these are universal even though sent to local churches.

Why Named in the Order Given? Every detail of Scripture has a meaning. Nothing is thrown together in a haphazard manner. The churches are named in the exact order in which a messenger from Patmos would deliver them. The seven churches formed a circle with Ephesus as the imperial gateway of the province. See map. Along the coast was a great Roman highway built between 133 and 130 B.C. It passed through Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos. An imperial post road ran east from Pergamos, the capital of the province, through Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, where it joined another post road direct from Ephesus. This was a recognized circuit of imperial, provincial, and commercial postmen.

Methods of Sending Letters. In the days of Bible writers there were three ways of sending mail. (1) By private messenger employed by all who could afford it. Most of Paul's letters were sent to the various churches addressed, by private messenger, Christian friends who volunteered to carry them. (2) By messengers of commercial organizations which carried on commerce between the cities of the province and the world. These postmen could be hired to carry private messages if the delivery was not off their regular route. (3) By imperial or provincial postmen. Roman officials were constantly sending letters to all parts of the province and of the world. This was doubtless the method used by John as the other methods were naturally closed to him. This may be one reason why only the seven on the circuit were named. Each of these churches named formed the center of a group of other churches which doubtless also received the Apocalypse.

Especially For Remnant. While this last book was dedicated to all seven of the churches representing the seven periods of the Christian era, the evidence is conclusive that it was written especially for the church of the last period. Its chief purpose is to prepare the remnant of the church for the revealing of Christ in His second advent. "The importance of studying the Apocalypse increases with the lapse of time....Every revolving century, every closing year, adds to the urgency with which attention is challenged to the concluding portion of Holy Writ. And does not that intensity of devotion to the present, which characterizes our times and our country, enhance the reasonableness of this claim? Never, surely, was there a period when some mighty counteracting power was more needed. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, duly studied, supplies an appropriate corrective influence. Would that all Christians might, in fullest measure, receive the blessing of 'them that hear the words of this prophecy, and that keep the things which are written therein; for the time is at hand.'"--"Thompson's Patmos," pp. 28, 29.

Memory Text: Rev. 1:5.

THE SALUTATION

6

Apostolic Greeting. Rev. 1:4-8 is not strictly a part of the Apocalypse. It is a sort of prelude to the visions of the book; the apostolic overture to the revelation of Jesus; the prophet's invocation of grace, mercy and peace upon those who read, hear, and keep what is written in it. Through John the Trinity salutes the church and seals the message. This is indeed a magnificant salutation. In all literature there is not a more sublime or appropriate opening for a book, nor a message backed with more complete authority. Such salutations were customary in Bible times. See Dan. 4:1; 6:25; 2 Cor.13:14. None was ever so complete and full of meaning as that of the Apocalypse.

The Eternal Father. The revelation, the promised blessings, and grace and peace come from all three members of the godhead. Grace is the unmerited favor of God and there can be no peace without the grace or God's favor. There is no peace to the wicked. See Isa. 57:20,21. These blessings originate with the Eternal Father with a beginningless past and an endless future. "Is", "was" and"is to come", is a Hebrew expression denoting the eternity of Jehovah. He is the "high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity". Isa. 57:15. His existence covers the eternity of the past, the present, and the eternity of the future.

Christ Also the Eternal. v.8. Here the same terms are used in describing Christ. He too is eternal. Creation had a beginning but He was before creation. He was the Beginner, the Originator; "The beginning and Lord of God's creation"--Rev.3:14, Weymouth. He also survives all changes and is the end. All beginnings were made by Him and He will bring about all consumations. He is here called the "Almighty" and in Isa. 9:6 He is called "The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father." Christ is the "I Am" of Ex. 3:14,15. He said "Before Abraham was, I am". See John 8:56-59 He is "the same, yesterday, today, and forever".Heb.13:8

From the Seven Spirits. This is symbolic of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead. Seven represents the fullness and perfections of Hispower and the diversity of His operations. See Rev.4:5; 5:6. He is known in the Scriptures as (1) "The Spirit of God", (2) "The Spirit of His Son", (3) "The Spirit of holiness", (4) "The Spirit of wisdom", (5) "The Spirit of love", (6) "The Spirit of grace", and (7) "The Spirit of glory". He is thus Himself God, the vicegerent of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the revealer of truth and wisdom, the One who sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts, the dispenser of grace, and the revealer of the glory of God to man. His nature and operations are seven-fold and thus complete. Isa.11:2,3.

The Eyes of Christ. Rev.5:6. Christ's eyes are said to be like "lamps of fire". Rev.1:14. Through the Holy Spirit, who in turn commands the angels or "ministering spirits", the Father and Son see all that takes place on earth. 2 Chron. 16:9. In Zech. 4:6,10,14 Christ and the Holy Spirit are called the two "anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." The Holy Spirit is said to be "before His throne". He "proceedeth from the Father". John 15:26. "We have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Eph.2:1~~5~~8. We must do our praying "in the Holy Spirit." Jude 20. The Holy Spirit "maketh intercession for us". Rom.8:26. From these blazing lamps the candlesticks or churches receive the light that makes them the light of the world.

"And From Jesus Christ". v.5. All three members of the godhead cooperate through successive dispensations in the work of redemption as they did in the work of creation. The revelations, blessings, grace and peace come from all three. Christ is described last because of the fuller revelation given of Him of whom the book is a revelation. He is the first cause and the last effect, the origin of all and the goal of all, the first to seek the sinner and the last to forsake him. Thus, true to the title of the book we are given here a revelation of His eternity, offices, character, love, and final dominion. He stamps the Apocalypse with the authority of His three-fold office,--Prophet, Priest, and King.

– Seven-Fold Description. (1) "The faithful Witness". "The truthful witness"-Weymouth. "The faithful and true witness"-Rev.3:14. In Rev. 11:3,10 the "two witnesses" are also called the "two prophets". In a special sense prophets have been God's witnesses and Jesus was the great Prophet and Witness especially during His earthly life. The Apocalypse is called, "the testimony of Jesus". See Rev.1:2;19:10. Christ is the chief of the two witnesses for God to man and for man before God. His testimony is dependable for "it is impossible for Him to lie." What a contrast to the witnesses of this age of "trucebreakers" and "liars" who "love" and "make" lies. The crime of perjury on the witness stand is almost universal.

Heb6:18

quality

– (2) "The First Begotten of the Dead". "First of the dead to be born to life"--Weymouth. "The chief-born of the dead"--Emphatic diaglott. See also Col.1:15,18; 1 Cor.15:20. "First begotten" means the inheritor of all. He arose from death to inherit and bestow eternal life. First is in point of quality rather than time. The "first-fruits" must also be the "chief-fruits". Christ was not the first to be resurrected. All other resurrections, however, depend on His. Moses was raised to life because the resurrection of Christ was an assured fact. This was the reason for the dispute of Jude 9. Christ's resurrection was the crowning and overwhelming proof and demonstration of His deity and Messiahship. It was the event that sealed His priesthood. See Heb.2:17,18. After His resurrection He entered upon His work as Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. He could not be a priest till he had become the God-Man.

– (3) "Prince of the Kings of Earth" Christ's third office is that of King which in the fullest sense He occupies when redemption is complete. It is therefore a prophetic title fulfilled in its completeness when He takes the throne of David and reigns over the twelve nations of the saved. He will then be "King of kings, and Lord of lords." "Prince over the kings of the earth"--Moffatt.

Supreme Ruler Now. In one sense Christ is now the Prince or Ruler "over" or "above" the kings of the earth as indicated in Eph. 1:20,21. The crucified Peasant became the Lord of Roman emperors and was above and over them in authority and power. This is a hard lesson for kings and rulers to learn. The ten plagues of Egypt failed to teach Pharaoh that lesson. Nebuchadnezzar learned it by a hard experience. See Dan.4:30-32. Belshazzar learned it too late, after the message on the wall had spelled out his doom. Napoleon while on St. Helena said: "Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires; but upon what did the creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for Him."--"Bertrand's Memoirs", Paris, 1844; also Giekie's "Life of Christ", p.2,3.

(4) "Unto Him That Loved Us." "Loveth"-R.V. "Loves"--Other versions. The love is not past only, but continuous. The supreme act of dying for us did not extinguish His love. Calvary was the great demonstration of that love for the cross alone measures the height and depth and breadth of God's love. The marks of the crucifixion will be the evidence of that love throughout all eternity. See Isa. 49:15,16. Love is the foundation principle of His government for "God is love." 1 John 4:8. We should love Him for He craves our love in return. It is tragedy to love and not be loved in return. No wonder He is grieved when we relax our first love and love-works. Not the love of power but the power of love controls the supreme Lover of man.

(5) "Washed Us From Our Sins in His Own Blood." "Loosed us"--R.V. "Freed us",--20th C.N.T. Past tense indicating an accomplished fact. "As God's great love, in all its fulness, is a present love; so our absolution through the blood of Christ is a past absolution. We have not to wait and work to be forgiven. The work has long since been done. The decree went forth, the releasing word was spoken, the forgiveness was declared, when Jesus left His tomb; and all that any man has to do on that subject is to believe it, and to appropriate to himself the glorious reprieve."--"The Apocalypse", Joseph A. Seiss, Vol.1,p.50. A happy man answered the question as to when he had been pardoned from his sins by saying: "It happened 2000 years ago but I just found it out yesterday." Sinners are captives in bondage, slaves to habits and besetting sins. Isa.49:24,25. The purpose of the gospel is to free us from those fetters. Isa.61:1-3.

Also Washes Us. Ps.51:2,7; Zech.13:1; Isa.1:18. Scarlet is one of the hardest colors to remove without destroying the cloth. It is symbolic of sin, and the government of Satan is symbolized by a red dragon and the church of Satan is represented by a harlot woman clothed in scarlet. The blood of Christ is the great sin remover. There are many quack sin-doctors and patent sin-remedies but only the blood of Christ can cleanse from sin. It is the only price that could purchase our redemption. See 1 Peter 1:18,19. Only the Creator could redeem. He paid an enormous price but will be satisfied. Isa. 53:11.

(6) "Hath Made Us Kings and Priests." "A kingdom, to be priests" --R.V. "A kingdom of priests in the service of God."--20th C.N.T. "A kingdom--priests unto his God and Father."--English Revised. In 1 Peter 2:5,9 the church is called "a royal priesthood". Most MSS render it "a kingdom of priests" or "a royal priesthood" which is in harmony with Ex.19:6. The regal and sacerdotal dignities are the two highest among men. "Hath made us" indicates a present condition but it also applies to the redeemed state. See Rev.5:10; 20:6. Like ancient Israel under God's purpose the church today is to present all nations before the throne of grace in intercession and ministry. Israel failed signally but God's purpose will be fulfilled gloriously in modern Israel under the latter rain. Thus far modern Israel has been about as unfaithful as was ancient Israel.

(7) "To Him be Glory and Dominion Forever and Ever." "The glory brightens as the account proceeds. That we should have a place in the affectionate regard, and tender, effective love of the great Lord, is much. That we should have forgiveness for all our sins, made perfect by His free grace at the cost of His own Life's blood, is almost too much for belief. But to affection is added honor, and to salvation official dignities. We are not only loved, and freed from our sins, but, if indeed we are Christians, we are princes and priests, named and anointed for immortal regencies and eternal priesthoods. Let men despise and contemn religion as they may, there is empire connected with lowly discipleship, royalty with penitence and prayers, and sublime priesthood with piety....There is not a believer, however obscure or humble, who may not rejoice in princely blood, who does not already wield a power which the potencies of hell cannot withstand, and who is not on his way to possess eternal priesthood and dominion."--"The Apocalypse". Seiss, Vol. 1, pp. 51,52.

An Everlasting Kingdom. The prophet was enraptured with the prospect of a rulership and dominion under King Jesus whom he had known and loved. After declaring that His glory and dominion will continue forever and ever, he adds "Amen", which means, "so be it". Because the kingdoms of earth are transitory and oppressive and their rulers become corrupt, haughty, arrogant and cruel, every saint should join the apostle with a hearty "Amen". The rule of Christ will be in justice and equity and will thus be permanent. His throne "is for ever and ever" because "a sceptor of righteousness is the scepter" of His kingdom. Heb. 1:8. His kingdom will not only continue forever but will never cease to increase. Dan.2:44; Isa.9:6,7. An ever increasing peace will especially characterize the rule of "the Prince of Peace". No wonder John was enthusiastic in anticipation of such a kingdom and Ruler.

Memory Text: Rev. 1:6

?
Mark 12:25
Matt 22:30

"BEHOLD HE COMETH"

7

Focal Event of Apocalypse. Rev. 1:7. The return of Christ is the ultimate goal of all prophecy. Especially is it the objective of the Revelation and the focal event of all its contents. It is the hub around which the apocalyptic visions revolve. "Abruptly verse 7 throws upon the screen the objective of the book....It gives the reader his proper position and attitude in confronting the whole book....This is the event which, next after Calvary, focalizes all rays of Scriptural prediction from Gen. 3:15 onward....The annunciation of this agust event will evoke from the sanctified heart a fervent, 'Even so. Amen.'"--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", W.C.Stevens, pp. 36,37.

Climax of Book. Not only is the second advent the climax of each vision of the book but of the book itself. The closing chapters describe the coming King and His re-established kingdom of glory. The imprisoned John was so enraptured by the prospect of such a kingdom and Ruler that he cried out, "Behold, He cometh". Who cometh? The one he had just described in verses 5,6. "Behold" is an expression used to arrest attention and prepare the way for an important announcement. Man has failed in his rulership of the world and no nation or combination of nations can bring order out of chaos. Christ alone is able and qualified to take the government of the world upon His shoulder and restore the throne and kingdom of Adam. This will bring rejoicing to the whole universe. See Rev. 11:15-17; 19:5,6. This celebration will be the antitypical Feast of Tabernacles.

Man's Extremity, God's Opportunity. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity. Human management of the affairs of the universe is failing. Without divine intervention the world and its people will plunge into chaos. America is rent asunder by the spirit of defiance of law and order. There appears to be no man or men big enough in this land to stay the rising tide of disaster.... The American republic is already in the twilight of its darkest hour. It would be folly to deny the desperate conditions that exist...Man's extremity has arrived. It is now God's opportunity. He alone can save the world....The people of America must go down on their knees and ask for divine aid. In all our churches, of all sects and all denominations, there should be humble, united confession of error, and earnest, honest prayer to the Creator for mercy and help."--Editorial in "The Pittsburgh Leader".

The Same Jesus. John was thrilled by the thought that the same Jesus he had known and loved and for whose return he had looked and prayed was to return as King and occupy the throne of David. He could never forget Christ's first announcement of His departure and the effect it had on the disciples, and the wonderful promise Jesus made on that occasion. He himself had recorded it. John 13:36-14:5. The parting scene was also fresh in his memory when Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives. Acts 1:9-11. They had watched the cloud till it dwindled into invisibility. The advent hope was the hope and comfort of the apostolic church and all who truly love Him now will long for His return.

"Cometh With Clouds". "He is coming in the clouds"-Weymouth. He is to come "in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven". Acts 1:11. See Luke 21:27; Rev. 14:14. This is not the ordinary cloud but a cloud of angels composing the celestial chariot. See Ps. 104:3,4; 68:17,18. In Matt. 25:31 we are told that "all His holy angels" will return with Him, and Paul declared that there is an "innumerable company of angels". The chariot of God however is composed of cherubim and seraphim. See Ps. 18:10; Eze. 1:1-14; 10:9,13-15; Rev. 4:6-10. They are the mighty angels who stand and minister next to the throne of Jehovah. This was doubtless the fiery chariot that came for Elijah when he was translated.

"Every Eye Shall See Him". It will not be a secret event known only to a favored few who share in a certain belief as taught by Christian Scientists, Mormons, Russelites, Theosophists, etc. Jesus said when such beliefs are taught to "believe it not". See Matt. 24:23-27. It will be the most public of all events and from it none can hide. How can all see Christ return when we live on a round world? Ps. 50:3-5; Hab. 3:3-5. "His splendor over all the sky, His glory filling all the earth; His radiance is a lightning blaze, on either side flash rays and there He veils His might. Before Him pestilence strides, behind Him the burning plague."-Moffatt. He doesn't touch the earth but as it turns His people are gathered to Him by the angel reapers. See 1 Thes. 4:14-18. This is the reason the cloud first appears in the East.

"They Also Which Pierced Him." See Zech. 12:9,10. Includes the Roman soldiers who drove the nails through His hands and feet; Pilate who gave the cruel and unjust sentence; the Jews who demanded His death and were most responsible for the tragedy; and also many in the last generation who by their sins "crucify Him afresh and put Him to an open shame". Jesus told Caiaphas, the high priest, that he would witness His return. Matt. 26:62-64. This is possible only by the special resurrection which is foretold in Dan. 12:1,2. This is not a description of the general resurrection. Some must suffer three deaths.

"All Kindreds Shall Wail." The world will not be ready for Christ's return. Their rejection of God's last warning message leaves them without excuse. When the day of God's wrath comes they recognize it because they have heard the message. See Rev. 6:14-17; Matt. 24:30; Isa. 13:6-8; Luke 13:28. There are two kinds of sorrow and mourning. The sorrow of the world because of the results of sin, and godly sorrow that leads to repentance. See 2 Cor. 7:9-11; Joel 2:12-17. All who do not know godly sorrow now will experience the other when "the mighty men shall cry there bitterly". Zeph. 1:14-18. "Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep." Luke 6:25.

The Righteous Will Rejoice. Isa. 25:8,9; Titus 2:13. All who mourn over their sins now will rejoice then "with joy unspeakable and full of glory". Those who laugh at sin and find pleasure in unrighteousness now will weep, wail, and mourn then. We must take our choice between a silly, giddy, foolish, hilarious life now and bitter wailing then, or, a serious, sober, godly life now and unspeakable joy then. When the dark night of sin and sorrow is over the righteous will rejoice with exceeding joy. See Ps. 126:6.

Fundamental of Christianity. "He cometh"....Few believe this, and fewer lay it to heart. Many sneer at the very idea, and would fain laugh down the people who are so simple as to entertain it. But it is nevertheless the immutable truth of God, predicted by all His prophets, promised by Christ Himself, conformed by the testimony of angels, proclaimed by all the apostles, believed by all the early Christians, acknowledged in all the church creeds, sung of in all the church hymn-books, prayed about in all the church lithurgies, and entering so essentially into the very life and substance of Christianity, that without it there is not Christianity, except a few maimed and mutilated relics too powerless to be worth the trouble or expense of preservation. > That religion that does not look for a returning Saviour, or locate its highest hopes and triumphs in the judgment scenes for which the Son of man must appear, is not the religion of this book, and is without authority to promise salvation to its devotees. <--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol.1, p.55.

Hope of Church in All Ages. The hope and message of Enoch, Jude 14; of Job, Job 19:25-27; of David, Ps. 17:15; of Daniel, Isaiah, Paul, Peter, and of all the prophets, Acts 3:20,21. The second advent is mentioned more than 300 times in the New Testament making more than 30 pages. Moody declared that there are 2,500 texts in the Bible mentioning the second advent. He was at one time asked what was the secret of his untiring effort for the salvation of souls. With tears in his eyes he replied: "The secret of my work has been my looking forward for the coming of Jesus Christ." *

Secret of Success. "Long years ago I cam to see this wonderful truth, and I have no hesitation at all in saying that it completely transformed my ministry. If I have had any success in soul winning, if I have had any ability to turn men to righteousness, I think I must attribute it all to the influence of this wonderful truth. It has kept me with my eyes fixed on His coming, it has kept me with my heart longing for His return."--Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman.

Secret of True Optimism. "There have been four marked epochs in my Christian experience....and fourth, when I came to see the truth concerning the second coming of Christ. The latter truth transformed my whole idea of life, it broke the power of the world and its ambitions over me, and filled my life with the most radiant optimism even under the most discouraging circumstances."--Dr. R. J. Torrey.

Test of Fundamentalism. "If a man tells me he believes in God, I don't know what he believes; I don't know whether he believes in the Pantheistic view of God, or in the Deistic view of God, or in the personal God. If a man tells me he believes in the inspiration of the Scriptures, I still don't know what he believes; he might claim universal inspiration, and say the Bible was inspired in the same way that Shakespere was inspired. If a man tells me he believes in the divinity of Christ, I still don't know what he believes; he might say he believes all men are divine.

But when a man tells me he believes in the literal, personal, bodily, visible, imminent return of the Lord to this earth as

King, I know what he believes on every other subject. I know that he believes the Bible literally. I know what he believes concerning the Godhead, I know what he believes concerning the Virgin Birth, I know what he believes concerning the Atonement, I know what he believes concerning the resurrection. I know that he is not a modernist, and I know that he does not believe the evolutionary hypothesis."--J. Frank Norris, in "World's Work", Sept. 1923.

Adventists are Fundamentalists. "There are no fundamental grounds of disagreement between the organized church of Jesus Christ and Seventh-day Adventists. On all cardinal doctrines of the Bible--the miraculous conception, the virgin birth, the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, the deity of Christ, the atonement of Christ, and the second coming, the personality of the Holy Spirit, and the infallible Bible--the Seventh-day Adventist rings as true as steel."--John Edward Brown, president of the Interdenominational Federation of Christian Workers. In a pamphlet, "The Cult Kingdom", published at Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

Protestant Leaders. "We must hunger after Christ till the dawning of that great day when our Lord will fully manifest the glory of His kingdom. The whole family of the faithful will keep in view that day."--John Calvin.

"O, that Christ would remove the covering, draw aside the curtains of time, and come down! O, that the shadows and the night were gone." Samuel Rutherford.

"Hasten, O my Saviour, the time of Thy return! Send forth thine angels, and let that dreadful, joyful trumpet sound. Thy desolate bride saith, Come. The whole creation saith, Come. 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.' "--Richard Baxter.

A Sublime Supplication. "Come forth out of Thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of the earth! Put on the visible robes of Thy imperial majesty; take up that unlimited scepter which Thy almighty Father hath bequeathed Thee. For now the voice of the bride calls Thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed."--John Milton.

"A day of rest and triumph, and every good, delay not thy dawning! Let the angels at once be sent to gather the elect. Let the promise be fulfilled which bears in its train these matchless glories. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."--Uriah Smith.

Comp. & style

The Cloudy Chariot. "The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious. until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror....With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way....His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun....The King of kings descends upon the cloud, wrapped in flaming fire."--G.C. 640,641.

Memory Text: Rev. 1:7

THE INTRODUCTORY VISION

8

Opening Scene. Rev. 1:9-20 presents the first scene in the visions of the Apocalypse, the great prophetic drama of Jesus Christ. This introductory vision reveals through a beautiful symbolism the relation of Christ, as Priest of the heavenly sanctuary, to His churches here on earth. In one sense this vision constitutes the portal of the Revelation. Its visions can be understood only from the viewpoint of Jesus as the great High Priest among the candlesticks. The seven churches are first named in their order and are then symbolized with their message-bearers or ministers.

Circumstances. v. 9. The churches also were receiving their share of the baptism of blood during Domitian's persecutions. John told them that he was a "co-partner in the affliction"-Emphatic Diaglott. "Partaker with you in the tribulation"-R.V. Christ is also identified with them in this tribulation. Patience has the meaning here of steadfast endurance. It is the "patience of Jesus Christ" because it is His own tribulation. See Matt. 25:45. John's steadfastness under tribulation was two-fold. He was on Patmos because of his obedient hearing of "the word of God" and for his courageous speaking of "the testimony of Jesus Christ", as the spokesman of the True Witness.

Kingdom and Patience. If we would share with Christ in the glories of His kingdom, we must first share in His sufferings and patience. See Rev. 14:12. "Tribulation worketh patience."(Rom. 5:3) and "we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God", (Acts 14:22). The remnant of the church go through "great tribulation". Rev. 7;14. Domitian thought that he had silenced the testimony of John and had extinguished his torch. Judaism was hated by the pagans above all religions and Christianity was considered the most hateful form of Judaism. All efforts to destroy Christianity redounded to its advancement. See Ps. 76:10; 2 Cor. 13:8. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance", "but the name of the wicked shall rot." (Ps. 112:6; Prov. 10:7). Domitian is almost forgotten except as the persecutor of Christians. John is better known with each passing year. His writings are read in almost a thousand languages and his name is emblazoned on one of the twelve foundations of the celestial city. He will be one of the kings of redeemed Israel. The names of Daniel's enemies are unknown while Daniel's fame grows with passing time. The same is true of John Bunyan and his foes.

Vision Given on the Sabbath. v. 10. Dr. Seiss declares that the Lord's day here does not mean Sunday, which is true. He is mistaken however in saying that it refers to "the day of the Lord". The language is clear that the prophet was "in the Spirit" on a definite day when Christ appeared to him in vision. It could not have been Sunday for the first day of the week was never observed as the Sabbath or termed the Lord's day until several centuries after Christ. Only one day in Scripture was ever known as the Lord's day and that was the seventh day Sabbath. See Ex. 20:8-11; Isa. 58:13; Mark 2:28. John followed a life custom and retired on the Sabbath to a quiet place for study, meditation and prayer.

Only Men of Prayer are given visions such as these. Men and women who know how to pray have left the deepest impressions on the world. Abraham prayed and angels visited his habitation; Jacob was in prayer when his brother's heart was softened and his own character changed so that he became the father of all overcomers or Israelites; Elijah's prayer closed and opened heaven and finally called down the royal chariot of heaven to escort him to glory land; Daniel prayed three times a day and received marvelous visions from God. He was on his knees when Gabriel arrived to tell him that he was greatly beloved in heaven. Christ was praying when He was transfigured, and again when the Holy Spirit came upon Him at His baptism. The disciples were in the upper room in prayer when the Pentecostal blessings came; Cornelius was praying when the angel of God visited him and Peter was praying when he was given a vision so that he might bring Cornelius the gospel; Paul and Silas were praying in the Philippian jail when deliverance came; Stephen was praying when he saw the Son of God at the right hand of His Father; and John was in prayer when he was given the Apocalypse. The book was not given without prayer; neither can it be understood and appreciated without prayer.

The Trumpet-Voice. "Like the blast of a trumpet"--20th C.N.T. The voice doubtless startled him as he thought he was alone. The trumpet seems to be sacred because of its use in connection with important announcements. "When God revealed Himself on Mount Sinai, He broke the silence with the 'voice of a trumpet, exceeding loud'. When the service of the temple began in the morning, and the great door was opened, it was at the sound of the trumpet. When the year of Jubilee came round, it was ushered in by the sounding of the silver trumpet. And so when the silence of the tomb is broken, and the scattered children of God gathered for their rewards, it shall be with 'the voice of the archangel and the trumpt of God'; 'for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed'"--"The Apocalypse" Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 70. The voice of the trumpet summoned the apostle to contemplate the truths to be revealed and the same voice summons us to hear and lay to heart the things revealed.

Speaker's Introduction. v. 11. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet and correspond to A and Z in the English alphabet. It was the Jewish custom to use the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet to represent the whole of a matter from beginning to end. "From aleph to tau". Jesus said: "I am all eternity. I have existed before all ages"- Dr. Adam Clarke. The command for the apostle to write in a book what he was about to see indicates that the Apocalypse was given in a series of scenes that were acted out before the prophet and which he wrote down as fast as they were given.

The Vision. v. 12. "I turned to see who is was that was speaking to me"--Weymouth. Verses 13-18 identify the speaker beyond a question of a doubt. It was Jesus the very center of the heavenly sanctuary service and the One of whom the Apocalypse is a revelation. If we would understand the book we must turn from all earthly attractions and behold the Speaker and Author of the book. We should never be as interested in the events portrayed as the Portrayer.

The Golden Candlesticks. v. 12,13. "Lamp stands"-Most Versions. Candlesticks or lampstands do not produce the light; they are only light-bearers holding forth the light produced by the oil which feeds the flame. In the holy place of the Mosaic tabernacle was a lampstand with seven branches made of pure gold in one beaten piece. It had a central lamp with three on each side in opposite pairs. The entire standard was elaborately ornamented with engraved figures and flowers. It contained a talent of gold valued at $25,000. It was five feet in height and three and a half in width and weighed more than 100 pounds. The lamps were supplied with pure beaten olive oil and the lights were kept continually burning. See Ex. 27:20,21. In Solomon's temple there were ten other candlesticks. 1 K. 7:49. This candlestick was used to help light the banquet hall of Belshazzar and to grace the triumph of Titus at Rome and from there was carried to Carthage by the Vandals.

Symbolic of Churches. Every article of furniture in the Mosaic tabernacle was symbolic, and here we are given the meaning of the seven golden candlesticks. See v. 20. A lamp stand or candlestick is a fit symbol of the church, the light of the world, God's earthly organization for the dissemination of the gospel light. See Matt. 5:14-16. God's people are described as "lights in the world" "holding forth the word of life". Gold is symbolic of purity and glory. It is the most precious metal; the sacred and royal metal. The congregation of saints constitute the most precious and glorious of all earthly treasure. See Isa. 13:12; Mal. 3:16,17, margin.

Seven Lamp-stands. The seven branches of the one candlestick fitly represents the one church of all ages including all its branches or congregations. The entire Christian church of all times and places is symbolized. "So then, these seven Asian churches in mystical reality were severally and alike pure as finest gold, beautiful with heavenly figures and flower, perfect in unity as the Father and Son, complete and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, entirely qualified to give celestial radiance in the midst of terrestrial darkness."-"Revelation, the Crown-Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 50.

"The seven golden candlesticks of the Patmos vision represent seven churches, the mystery of which is that they in turn represent a seven-fold unfolding in regard to the entire history of Christendom."--"Studies in the Book of Revelation", Lamb, p. 33.

Garments of High Priest. v. 13. "A priestly garment down to the foot."-Rhemish Translation. "With a girdle of gold across His breast"-Weymouth. "With a long robe and a belt of gold around His breast."-Moffatt. See Ex. 28:1-8. The garments of Aaron and his sons. Jesus is here represented as our High Priest ministering in behalf of the churches in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary where He entered and began work on the day of Pentecost. He never was a priest before he was qualified by His earthly visit and death. See Heb. 2:17,18. He must become the Son of man before He could minister as a Priest for man before God. This is a vision of Jesus carrying on the daily or continual service in the virst apartment of the heavenly temple. Because of His death He became a "priest forever after the order of Melchisedec" and "ever liveth to make intercession for us".

Keeps Lights Burning. One of the duties of the high priest and his assistants was to keep the lamps trimmed and burning, and so Christ is represented as walking about among the candlesticks or churches keeping them trimmed and burning. The light is the word of God. See Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23. Jesus is the living Word, the Truth, the "Light of the world". The church is to "hold forth the words of life". The whole picture indicates that the dark night of sin covers the world with darkness and that the church holds forth the only light in the world. The church receives the oil of grace and the fire from Christ and the Holy Spirit who are called the "Sons of Oil". See Zech. 4. "When the anointed ones empty themselves through the golden pipes, the golden oil flows out of themselves into the golden bowls, to flow forth into the lamps, the churches."--T.M. 337.

Lamps Divinely Fed. "God's people are to be channels for the outworking of the highest influence in the universe. In Zechariah's vision the two olive-trees which stand before God are represented as emptying the golden oil out of themselves through golden tubes into the bowl of the sanctuary. From this the lamps of the sanctuary are fed, that they may give a continuous bright and shining light. So from the anointed ones that stand in God's presence the fulness of divine light and love and power is imparted to His people, that they may impart to others light and joy and refreshing. They are to become channels through which divine instrumentalities communicate to the world the tide of God's love."--Vol. 6:11,12.

Christ and Holy Spirit. "The continued communication of the Holy Spirit to the church is represented by the prophet Zechariah under another figure, which contains a wonderful lesson of encouragement to us."--T.M. 509.

"Those who present the eternal principles of truth need the holy oil emptied from the two olive branches into the heart. This will flow forth in words that will reform, but not exasperate. The truth is to be spoken in love. Then the Lord Jesus by His Spirit will supply the force and the power. That is His work."-Vol.6:123.

A Wonderful Picture. "This figure illustrates the eternal vigilance of our Saviour. Christ is in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks walking from church to church, from congregation to congregation, from heart to heart. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. If the candlesticks were left to human beings they would soon flicker and go out, but God has not given His church into the hands of men. Christ is the Watchman of the house. He is the Warder faithful and true."--"The Watchman Magazine", May 19, 1908. The priests who ministered in the holy place of the Mosaic sanctuary and kept the lights trimmed and burning and supplied with oil were types of Christ, the Priest of the heavenly sanctuary. Here He is seen ministering among the churches and furnishing the oil that keeps the lights burning making His earthly body the light of the world.

Memory Text: Rev. 1:13.

THE GLORIFIED CHRIST

9

Christ's Prayer. John 17:1,5. "With the glory that I had in thy presence before the world existed"--Weymouth. When Jesus came to earth He veiled His divine glory in human flesh. Before His incarnation He had the glory of the Father, "being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person". See Heb. 1:3. But "He stripped Himself of His glory, and took on Him the nature of a bondservant by becoming a man like other men". Phil. 2:7. Weymouth. The description given of Him while in His humiliation indicates that there was nothing strikingly attractive about His physical appearance. Isa. 53:2. "He had no beauty to attract our eyes, no charm to make us choose Him"-Moffatt. No true picture could be painted from the descriptions given. The pictures we have of Jesus are of very doubtful origin and probably bear little or no resemblance of Him. Most of them are too effeminate. In order to fulfill His mission Jesus could not present a striking physical appearance but must draw men to Him because of His matchless character and divine message.

His Prayer Answered. Rev. 1:13-18 presents the first vision of Christ after His ascension and indicates that His prayer has been fully answered. Jesus has been glorified with even more glory than He had before His incarnation. See Phil. 2:5-11. We should study this description of the glorified Christ because it is a photograph of the way He will look when He returns. Then the redeemed will "see the King in His beauty". Isa. 33:17. "Your eyes shall see the King in all His splendor."-Moffatt.

Daniel's Vision. Dan. 10:5-12. The two pictures are identical. Daniel described the Son of God before His humiliation and John after He had received back the glory of which He had voluntarily stripped himself that man might be glorified. The effect of the vision was the same on both prophets. Blinded by the glory they fall to the ground faint and helpless. Such a vision had the same effect on Saul of Tarsus. No wonder the wicked cannot look upon Him in His glory and live when He returns "in all His glory, and the glory of the Father". These are the only authentic pictures of our glorified Lord given by eye-witnesses. No wonder Jesus had to introduce Himself to John.

Still Son of Man. v. 13. Though glorified Jesus is still the God-Man,Emmanuel, forever linked with humanity as our "Elder Brother". He ministers for man as "the Son of man", a work He could not do when only the Son of God. "Being made in the likeness of men" He is able to intercede for mankind being "touched with the feeling of their infirmity". Because of this new relation to the human family Jesus requested the Father that He never be separated from redeemed humanity. See John 17:24. For this reason He takes a group of those saved out of the last and most wicked generation with Him wherever He goes. Rev.14:1-5. In harmony with the general plan of the book, the description of Christ is divided into seven parts representing the fulness of His beauty and glory and the completeness of His authority to minister to the spiritual needs of the seven churches.

1. Head and Hair. v. 14. This is the same description as is given the Father in Dan. 7:9. Jesus is the "express image of His person". Both are personal beings and look alike. We are told that "the hoary head is a crown of glory", and that "with the ancient there is wisdom". The hoary head here represents venerable age and profound wisdom, One vested with the attributes of eternity. Jesus is a High Priest forever without ancestral beginning or ending. In this life white hair may represent old age and declining strength, but with members of the Godhead, the Alpha and Omega of eternity, it is the emblem of antiquity and glory.

2. Eyes as Flame of Fire. "Lamps of fire"--Daniel. "Like flaming fire"--20th C.N.T "His eyes flashed like fire"--Moffatt. See Rev. 4:5; 5:6. This denotes the omniscience of Christ, His all-penetrating intelligence and knowledge. He has the power to read all secrets, to warm and search all hearts, and to bring all secret and hidden things to light. Nothing can be concealed from His searching, penetrating, piercing gaze. His eyes penetrate to the deepest and darkest depths of the soul and light up sin's most secret hiding places. They burn with holy indignation against all wrong. See Job 34:21,22; Heb. 4:13; They also behold every honest heart. 2 Chron. 16:9. It is said that one of the marks of Caesar's greatness was his fiery eyes, his penetrating, warming, revealing gaze which his enemies could not stand.

3. Feet Like Fine Brass. "Polished brass"-Daniel. "Glowed like burnished bronze"-Moffatt. "Like fine brass glowing with fire" -Emphatic Diaglott. "Like silver-bronze when it is white-hot in a furnace"-Weymouth. Brass is the symbol of unyielding strength and stability being considered the most durable of all metals. The symbol represents Christ's faithfulness and ability in upholding all who trust in Him. The original Greek word for brass as used here, according to Suides, refers to a famous metal used by the Greeks and Romans. It was a mixture of gold, silver and brass, of the color of amber, and far more precious than gold. See Ezra 8:27, margin. It was called "Corinthian brass" and was "of far higher value than even gold."-Gickle. During the refining process the furnace throws off flames of indescribable glory. (See Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. 34. c.2). Ida. 52:7. "How beautiful" are His feet as He walks among the churches as the Messenger of Heaven, Beautiful to those who love Him but terrible and consuming to those to be trodden underfoot by them.

4. His Voice. "Many waves"-Moffatt. "Many streams"--20th C.N.T. Daniel speaks of His voice as "the voice of a multitude", and Ezekiel "as the noise of an host" and "the noise of many waters". See Eze. 1:24; 43:2. This is symbolic of volume and majesty and musical harmony. See Ps. 29:4. It is "voice" and not "voices". Jesus is the spokesman of the Godhead and of the hosts of heaven. When He speaks He represents the universe, and His messages have the harmony of a well trained orchestra or choir. "Soon I heard a voice like many musical instruments all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard....It thrilled through my whole being."--E.W. 270.

5. In His Right Hand Seven Stars. This is interpreted in verse 20 as the angels of the seven churches. "Ministers of the seven churches"--Weymouth. Here is a wonderful lesson as to the holiness of the office and the solemnity of the responsibility of the ministers of Christ. It teaches that the power and authority to minister proceeds not from the church but from Christ. It calls for unswerving fidelity and loyalty. Jesus upholds the ministers who preach His word as His spokesmen.

6. The Two-edged Sword. The sword is seen coming out of His mouth. "Sharp sword with a double edge"--Moffatt. "Broadsword"--Emphatic Diaglott. The illustration is that of the Greek Thracian broadsword or the Roman double-bladed sword. It literally means "two-mouthed". It is the "sword of the Spirit" and cuts its way to the thoughts and intents of the heart. Heb. 4:12. It saves the righteous and slays the wicked. Rev. 19:15. It cuts to punish that it may heal as on the day of Pentecost. It is a fit symbol of the all-penetrating word of Christ by which the secrets of the heart are revealed. Christ is going about among the churches speaking His word and His messages are cutting and penetrating. His message is one of commendation and condemnation.

7. His Countenance. "The appearance of lightning"--Daniel. "Shining with his full strength."--Weymouth. "In the fulness of its power"--20th C.N.T. The sun is the symbol of divine majesty. It is the best illustration of glory and brightness known to man. The churches are symbolized by lamps, the ministers by stars, but Christ by the glory of the sun shining in the fulness of its power. Such was the appearance at the transfiguration, and when Paul saw Him near Damascus he was blinded by a light which was above the brightness of the sun". No man in his sinful state can see His face and live. Only those who become like Him now and behold His character can look upon His face when He comes, and live. The wicked will call for the mountains to fall on them and hide them from "the face" of the Lamb. See Rev. 6:14-17.

Picture Summed Up. "His eyes emit shafts of spiritual intelligence, love and omniscience; His countenance radiates beems of spiritual power like the mid-day sun; His voice is resonant with the majesty of many distant Niagaras; and out of His mouth proceedeth utterance penetrating and dividing like a two edged sword."-"Revelation, The Crown-Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", W.C. Stevens. p. 53.

16

Effect on Prophet. v. 17,18. Same as effect of vision on Daniel. Also Moses, Job, Isaiah, Paul, and Roman guard. The glory will slay the wicked at the second advent. 2 Thes. 2:8. It is better to fall "as dead" now than to be slain then. If we do not let the two edged sword kill sin in us now it will destroy us then.

"When I recall the magnificant portraiture, the human form, walking majestically amid golden furniture, clothed with the garment of royalty, girded with gold, crowned with flowing locks that reflect the light and purity of heaven, having a glance of electric power, feet glowing with the liquid splendor of melted brass, a voice of majesty at which the earth and the heavens shake, the right hand lit with starry jewels, a mouth whose words carry their own execution in them, and a countenance as glorious as the noonday sun;...when I bring all this before me, and try to realize it in my imagination, I am almost overwhelmed with the sublimity of the picture, and with the goodness, and grace, and power, and might with which the eternal Father hath invested the person of Jesus Christ....Here I see Him lifted up to the right hand of power, and clothed with all majesty, that creation's knees might bow at His feet, and creation's tongues confess His greatness and proclaim His praise. Here I see Godhead in manhood, unhumbled and unalloyed by the union; and humanity transformed and exalted to the sphere of the worshipful and Divine; and all, to give greatness to the lowly, and strength to the feeble, and honor to the despised; and to bring the lofty neck to obedience, tear away masks of falsehood, and enforce the rule of heaven on the earth. I do not wonder at the effect the vision produced upon the exiled apostle as it burst upon him in his lowly solitude. 'And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.'"--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, pp. 86,87.

The Living One. "I am the first and the last, and the living One"-R.V. All mere creatures here are dying ones. Christ's message to John was an announcement that since His resurrection He is again vested in the fulness of his Pre-existing glory and deity. John was nearing the century mark in age and must soon enter the tomb. Christ's words brought a comforting assurance that the power of the grave had been broken by His resurrection victory. "Because I live, you also shall live." Jesus reminded John that He too had been condemned by a Roman court and sentenced by a Roman judge. He had been placed in a tomb secured by a Roman seal and guarded by Roman soldiers. But all the power of the iron monarchy of Rome couldn't hold Him prisoner. Moreover He brought with Him the keys of death and the grave.

The Keys. "Keys of the gates of death"-Weymouth. The grave is a prison house and Satan claims the dead as his captives. See Job 3:17,18. Satan cannot release his captives. Isa. 14:17. margin. Christ by His resurrection victory has possession of the keys. "The lockers of the last enemy, death, and the unseen realm are in His exclusive and permanent possession."--W.C.Stevens. The key is the symbol of authority and power. Rev. 3:7. "When the son of the woman of Sarapta died, Elijah requested that he might be given the key of the resurrection of the dead."--Sanhedrin, fol. 113:1. More than 143,000,000,000 have entered the prison house of death and only a few have thus far been released. All will be released when Jesus returns. See John 5:25, 28,29; 1 Thes. 4:16-18.

Christ Has the Keys. "Death is a fearful power, locking up and holding tight all who come under its sway. What millions have gone down beneath that power, and are now held by it! Every acre of earth is full of them, and the bottom of the sea,...on all the slopes and hillsides, and in all the fields and valleys of earth, death's victims lie in fetters of darkness, silence and dust....But...He hath the keys of death."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 98.

Memory Text: Rev. 1:17.

THE EPHESIAN MESSAGE

10

Writer's Introduction. Rev. 2:1. The author of the letter to the church of Ephesus is identified in the opening statement. This is in harmony with the custom of the time when the writer gave his name or identity in the opening salutation instead of at the close as we do today. See beginning of Paul's epistles. Also Acts 23:26. This is the epistle of Christ to the church of Ephesus and the first of seven that He dictated to John His scribe to be sent to the seven churches of Asia. The word church means "to call out of" or "from among". It is an assembly of the called out from the world. The heathen Greeks used the term to denote a select assembly of free citizens to transact business. In Christianity it is the organized society of the called and elected.

Mystic Symbols. Rev. 1:20. A mystery is something that can be understood only when the meaning is revealed as in this case. Only a few things are called mysteries in the entire book and they are all explained. This indicates that when the Scriptures employ symbols they tell us so or in some way indicate it. When no indication to the contrary is given we must interpret the Scriptures according to the letter. The Apocalypse is not a book of mysteries; it is a revelation.

The Seven Candlesticks. The candlesticks were symbolic of the seven churches which in turn represented the church universal. "The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian era. The number seven indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extent to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world."--A.A. 585. The seven letters indicate a complete message for the church of the Christian era. Its seven-fold reproof is a summary of all the spiritual dangers that were to visit the church, and these perils describe Satan's chief weapons against it. The seven promises include all the privileges forfeited by man's disobedience.

Three-fold Application. Each name and letter gives us (1) A prophetic history of the city; (2) Of the local church located in it; and, (3) A period of the history of the church universal, all seven reaching from the days of the apostles to the second advent. "The seven churches represent for us the whole church....There were many other churches in Asia that might have been used....but it was sufficient for the purpose,..to select seven, and these representative of various aspects of the whole historical church."--"The Revelation", Herbert H. Gowen, p. 15.

Each Letter in Seven Parts. The division of each letter into seven parts indicates that each is a complete message to the church and period to which it applies, containing all the warnings, reproofs, counsels, and promises necessary to correct the prevailing condition. (1) The recipient. (2) The writer or sender. (3) The praise or commendation. (4) Reproof, censure, or condemnation. (5) Exhortation or call to repentance. (6) Appeal to hear. (7) Promise of reward. The only variation in this order is that in the first three letters the appeal preceeds the promised reward and in the last four it follows. Also Smyrna and Philadelphia are given no reproof and Sardis and Laodicea no praise.

Seven-fold Description of Christ. Each of the seven messages is issued by Christ in the setting of one of the attributes of Him as given in chapter one and appropriate to His dealings with that particular church. All seven introductions make up the complete picture of the glorified Christ. "Corresponding to this sevenfold division of the church, the outward appearance of the Divine Author of the seven letters is divided into seven groups of attributes; and one group of attributes is assumed by Him in addressing each of the seven churches, so that the openings of the seven letters, put together make up His whole outward and visible character."--"Letters to the Seven Churches", Sir William Ramsey.

The Seven Stars. "In the grasp of His right hand"-Weymouth. "Upon His right hand"-R.V. Anderson Scott in the Century Bible says: "In the image before the eyes of the Seer the seven stars probably appear as a chain of glittering jewels hanging upon the right hand of Christ." There was a chain of seven churches with their seven ministers. Stars are symbolic of high officials and here represents the highest officers of the individual churches. Christ is called "the bright and morning Star" and Lucifer before his fall "the day star" or "sun of the morning". In the dream of Joseph the 12 patriarchs were represented as stars and in Rev. 12 the woman symbolizing the church is crowned with a diadem of twelve stars representing the twelve apostles, the twelve leading lights of the church of Christ.

Ministers or Pastors. "Messengers of the seven congregations"--Emphatic Diaglott. "Ministers of the seven churches"-Weymouth. The word angel means messenger and is applied to men as well as celestial beings. See Hag. 1:13; Mal. 2:7. One of the chief officers of the Synagogue was known as the "angel" or "messenger" of the church. It was his duty to read, pray, and preach. While the churches are light-bearers, the ministers are light-givers. Where you see stars and need candles there is darkness. The gospel is "a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn." Since but one copy of the Apocalypse was made by John it was natural to send it to the minister or pastor and ask him to read it to the congregation. Timothy was probably pastor at Ephesus at that time as he was martyred there in A.D. 97. The right hand is the symbol of power and authority. Encouraging to a minister. See Isa. 41:10,13.

Christ the Supreme Head. "He who walks to and fro among the seven lamp-stands of gold"--Weymouth. How beautiful are His feet as He walks among the churches in the garments of a priest, His piercing eyes seeing everything, speaking His messages of love and reproof, upholding His ministers who are His spokesmen, and furnishing the oil that keeps the lights burning. The high priest and his assistants had a two-fold function. (1) To represent the people before God in the holy and most holy places out of sight of the people. (2) To represent God before the people in the court. Rev. 1:12-20 pictures the first phase of Christ's priestly ministry in the sanctuary above. Rev. 2 and 3 pictures Christ among the candlesticks or churches on earth in the court. Rev. 11:1,2. "While Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above, He is still by His Spirit the minister of the church on earth."--D.A. 166.

His Eternal Vigilance. "With untiring wakefulness and unremitting vigilance, He watches to see if the light of any of His sentinels is burning dim or going out. If the candlestick were left to mere human care, the flickering flame would languish and die; but He is the true Watchman of the Lord's house; the true Warden of the temple courts. His continued care and sustaining grace are the source of life and light."--A.A. 586.

"These letters hang before our eyes not only literal photos of those seven churches, but types also of churches and of believers throughout the present militant career of God's children as they march through the path of tribulation, besetment and peril till the end of the high priestly dispensation of the glorified Jesus."--"Revelation, the Crown-Jewel of Biblical Prophecy," W. C. Stevens, p. 63.

Messages of Supreme Importance. Dr. Bengel placed these seven epistles of Christ above everything else in importance and commended them especially to the study of young ministers. They constitute the only unabridged record of addresses by Christ in our possession. Seven times the command is repeated to hear what is said in them. And yet there is no other portion of Scripture given so little attention. "Exposition is also remarkably barren with respect to these Epistles. Though in every way marked as of equal account with the parables, they have not received a tithe of the attention. We have hundreds of disquisitions on other special discourses of the Saviour, where it would be difficult to find tens devoted to these, His last and most solemn, dictated from heaven, superscribed with His own marvelous attestations, and urged upon all by the sevenfold admonition to hear and ponder what they contain."--"The Apocalypse," Seiss, Vol. 1, pp. 150, 151.

City of Ephesus. The word Ephesus means "desirable". It was one of if not the most desirable city of the province and of all Asia. Ephesus was built in the eleventh century B. C. probably by Androcles, the son of the last king of Athens. It was located at the mouth of the Cayster River on the slopes of the hills overlooking the sea. Its beautiful situation, its fertile soil, and its excellent climate made it indeed a desirable place to live. It had one of the finest harbors of the world protected by high hills and with a narrow channel easily guarded and protected. Ships of all nations visited this port making it the leading commercial city of the West coast of Asia. It was the starting place of the great land trade route to the interior of Asia. By imperial edict it was made the gateway to the province of Asia for Roman officials.

The Greatest of Asia. Stamped on coins found in the ruins of Ephesus are the titles: "First of all the greatest," and "The first and greatest metropolis of Asia." Archeologists have traced 36,000 feet of the wall built by Lysimachus enclosing 1027 acres within the city. The wall was ten feet thick with towers every 100 feet and with six gates entering the city. From the harbor to the city was a very wide and beautiful street entering the city under a triumphal arch. The city was adorned with beautiful temples built by Nero, Hadrian, and Servius, beside the famous temple of Diana. The city was consecrated in the minds of the people by many myths and legends of gods and goddesses. It was one of the sacred cities of the

Temple of Artemis. The temple of Artemis (Greek) or Diana (Latin) made the city of Ephesus famous. The earliest temple was a century in building and was completed in 480 B. C. or about the time the Jews under Ezra were returning to Jerusalem. It was burned in B. C. 356 on the night Alexander the Great was born. It was later claimed that Diana, who was the goddess of child birth, was away from the temple attending the birth of Alexander and the temple burned because it was unguarded. Alexander offered to rebuild it at his own expense but the offer was refused. It was rebuilt by donations from all Asia and its erection required 120 years. It was destroyed by the Goths in 263 A. D. and was never again rebuilt. The temple was so magnificant that it was reckoned as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

The Ruins Uncovered. The location of the temple was unknown until discovered by archeologists in 1869. J. T. Wood led the expedition that started searching for the temple on May 2, 1863. Through an inscription found in the ruins of the city he found that the temple was not in the city. Searching the walls he found a magnificant gate with a road 35 feet wide paved with stones of fine marble. Following the roadway he discovered the boundary wall of the temple May 2, 1869 and on Dec. 31, of the same year discovered the foundation of the temple as a depth of 20 feet. He spent five years on the ruins employing from 100 to 300 men. He found six sculptured drums from ancient columns each of which were 20 feet in circumference and six feet high. The temple was built of white, blue, red and yellow marble of the finest quality.

Description of Temple. The foundation on which the temple stood was 425 feet long and 220 wide and was reached by a flight of ten steps. The temple itself was 160 by 340 feet and was supported by 127 pillars 60 feet in height. Instead of mortar, gold is reputed to have been used between the joints of marble blocks. The interior like most Grecian temples was open to the sky. The temple was a place of worship, a museum, a place of refuge, and a treasure house. Kings and rich men stored their wealth there under the protection of the great goddess. See Dan. 1:2. The greatness of the temple in Paul's day is indicated in Acts 19:27. Hundreds and perhaps thousands of priests were connected with the temple ritual. There were also a multitude of priestesses or vestal virgins who were dedicated to prostitution in the service of the temple. In the margin of Acts 19:35 Ephesus is called "the temple-keeper" and various inscriptions have been found declaring that Ephesus was the "temple-keeper of Diana", "the temple-keeper of the divine emperor." etc. One reads: "The first and greatest metropolis of Asia and twice temple-keepers of the Emperors, according to the decrees of the sacred assembly and temple-keepers of Artemis," etc.

The Great Goddess. Artemis was the chief deity of the city and one of the chief of the province and of the world. She was reckoned as the daughter of Jupiter and the twin-sister of Apollo. She was also known as the moon goddess and was doubtless one of the many manifestations of Semiramis, the "mother of the gods." Inscriptions call her the "saviour goddess" and "Mother of God" and she is represented as a goddess sitting and holding an infant in her arms. She is sometimes represented as holding a tambourine in one hand and a cup in the other. In A. D. 431 a council of the churches was held in Ephesus and the phrase "Mother of God" was adopted and applied to Mary. "For 50 generations or more the people of Asia Minor had worshiped a great mother goddess, often with her consort son. It was at Ephesus, the center of the worship of Diana, that ecclesiastics, many of whom had but slight traiming in Christianity, adopted this article into their statement of religious faith."-- "The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia," Vol. 1, p. 282.

The Silversmiths. Acts 19:23-26. An inscription was found with the name of "Demetrius son of Menophilus" which indicates that he was president of the board of magistrates or city fathers. This accounts for his great influence. Hundreds of shrines have been found and inscriptions indicating that thousands were made of gold, silver and terra-cotta. Records of gifts of gold and silver shrines as high as $850,000 were found on inscriptions showing that it was a lucrative source of income. An inscription was found on a block of marble giving rules of magic which throws light on Acts 19:18,19.

The City of Change. The message to Ephesus and the subsequent history of the city indicate that the "desirable" city would become the city of change and decay, or the declining city. From the third century Ephesus rapidly declined following the destruction of the temple and the filling up of the harbor with sediment. Efforts to hold the water back by making the channel more narrow only caused it to fill the faster. Today the site of the once proud Ephesus is six mines from the sea and what was once the entrance to the harbor is a shallow, sandy beach unapproachable by ships. The harbor was abandoned in the fourth century and is now a pestilential morass covered with mud and rushes. The city suffered the fate of the harbor and is now a part of the desert waste.

The City of Death. The candlestick was removed and "the first city of Asia" was no longer a brilliant light in the commercial and political world, Silence, malaria and death now brood over the ruins of Ephesus. Its great theatre, which was one of the finest and largest ever built and had a seating capacity of 25,000 still shows its grand outlines of pillars and walls and arches but the heavy masonry is partly hidden by weeds and brush. "Remnants of cyclopean walls, causeways, temples, streets, and houses, line the plains and hills and mountain-sides of a vast area which was once filled with their glory; but the whole place is a complete desolation, enveloped in a poisonous atmosphere, and tenanted only by things unclean and vile."--"The Apocalypse," Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 122.

Memory Text: Rev. 2:5.

ERA OF WANING LOVE

11

Christ's Message to Ephesus is not only prophetic of the history of the city which began in a desirable condition and ended in a heap of ruins, but also of the local church in Ephesus. The Ephesian church was organized by the Apostle Paul in A. D. 56 It had 12 charter members who after their baptism or rebaptism received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The whole city was mightily stirred by Paul's message. According to Acts 20:31 Paul remained there for three years. Ephesus being the metropolis of Asia the message during these three years spread to the entire province. It was doubtless during this time that the other churches of Asia were established. See Acts 19.

A Desirable Church. The church of Ephesus had received the labors of Pal, John, Apollos, and Timothy. It was the home of John and the ruins of a church still remain where it is said he was buried. Here doubtless the mother of Jesus lived till she died as Jesus gave her into John's keeping at the cross. Apollos was converted here and entered the gospel ministry. Here Timothy died a victim of mob violence, it is said because of his protest against the unbridled license during the festival of Diana. Paul labored for three years "day and night with tears" and wonderful were the results. The modern pulpit is cultured and eloquent but there are but few tears. Paul's ministry of tears brought the greatest revival of its kind in the history of Christendom, stirring all Asia with the gospel message.

Commendation. Rev. 2:2,3. Their love and faith were demonstrated by their works. They burned in the public square before "all men" books of magic valued at $28,250. They were not ashamed of their faith and they were very zealous in giving the message. See Acts 19:10-20. Mighty miracles were wrought among them,- the greatest of Paul's ministry. To this church Paul wrote one of the best and most spiritual of all his epistles containing some of the deepest and most sublime of his revelations. Jesus praised them for their ability to test false apostles which they had done in obedience to Paul's warning to the elders of Ephesus. See Acts 20:29-31. This warning had been given 37 years before. They had also suffered persecution patiently and without fainting. This began when the increasing gospel light caused the trade in silver images of Diana to decrease and thus stirred up the enmity of Demetrius and his fellow silver-smiths. See Acts 19:23-41.

A Sad Change. The love, patience, zeal, liberality, and spiritual power of the early Christians of the Ephesian church, waned in later years, and strife and dissension took the place of unity and brotherly love. False doctrines and false teachers multiplied. Worldliness crept into the church and evil men were tolerated. Miracles and missionary work diminished and disappeared. Paul's warnings were no longer heeded. See Eph. 4:14 The church decreased in membership and was finally disbanded. A few miserable Turkish huts are the only signs of life near the once proud city without a single Christian left of the once large and flourishing church of Ephesus.

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The Ephesian Period. "In the first place, the seven churches represent seven phases or periods in the church's history, stretching from the time of the apostles to the coming again of Christ, the characteristics of which are set forth partly in the names of these churches, but more fully in the epistles addressed to them. There has been an Ephesian period-- a period of warmth and love and labor for Christ, dating directly from the apostles, in which defection began by the gradual cooling of the love of some, the false professions of others, and the incoming of undue exaltations of the clergy and church offices."--"The Apocalypse",Seiss,Vol.1,p.142.

The First Century. The name of Ephesus and the Ephesian message are prophetic of the universal church during the days of the apostles, or the first century of Christianity. It is strikingly similar to the beginning and history of the local church of Ephesus. The period began with twelve charter members of the apostolic church who also received the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the result of the upper room experience. With this power they went forth conquering and to conquer. Jerusalem was mightily stirred and was "filled with their doctrine". The disciples went "everywhere preaching the word" and multitudes became Christians. According to Gibbon there were between five and six million converts by the close of the first century. The gospel went to all the world in a single generation. See Col.1:23.

Desirable Condition. "Ephesus is commended for its unflagging zeal and endurance, its unyielding attitude toward evil and evil doers; for its faithful scrutiny of professing apostles, and its keen detection and fearless exposure of lying claiments." --"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p.70 This shows that there were other apostles besides the 12, Their faith was "spoken of throughout the whole world", Rom. 1:8 They were noted for their love, unity, pure faith, missionary zeal, and their liberality. Mighty miracles were wrought even greater than those performed by Christ. The Lord supplied all the men and finances needed. See Acts 2:43-47; 4:31-35; 5:12-16; 9:31. Nicodemus and Joseph with their wealth accepted and sustained the Christian cause.

Brought Persecution. The progress of the gospel message threatened the prestige and authority of the Jewish leaders and caused their incomes to diminish. Their enmity was aroused and they began a relentless persecution. Joseph and Nicodemus, two of the members of the Sanhedrin and two of the wealthiest men of the nation became Christians and later Saul of Tarsus followed their example. Soon the gospel seeds were watered by the blood of martyrs. All the apostles except John died martyrs to the cause.

Praised for Works. "I know your life"--20th C.N.T. "I know your doings"--Weymouth. The message is given from the viewpoint of Christ's close scrutiny and intimate knowledge of their condition. His enumeration of their works shows that His piercing eyes had seen all. He appreciates their patient endurance under persecution, their ability to test false teachers who like wolves in sheep's clothing were multiplying. How test? See 1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20

John 8:31,32; Acts 17:11. They had "found them liars". Many were found to be agents of Satan masquerading as apostles of Christ. See 2 Cor. 11:13-15. Wherever it was possible Jesus gave praise and wherever it was necessary, reproof. In all the letters whatever was praiseworthy is mentioned first; a good example for all who deal with the erring. After praising their virtues, like a faithful friend, He points out their faults.

The Reproof. v. 4. "You have abandoned your first love"-20th C.N.T. "Relaxed"-Emphatic Diaglott. "You no longer love me as you did at first"-Weymouth. Their love for Christ had not been entirely extinguished; it had diminished and become lukewarm. Christ's love for them was unchanged; the coldness was on the part of the church. Christ had commended them for their work, labor, and patience. What was wrong? It was not the "work of faith", the "labor of love", and the "patience of hope". See 1 Thes. 1:3. Of faith, hope and love, the greatest is love, and this was lacking. Works without love are dead and useless. Love is the foundation of all true service. "For the love of Christ constraineth us", was the acknowledged motive power of the Christians of the early Ephesian period.

A Sad State. When Christian love diminishes it is evident that some other person or attraction has superceded Christ in the heart. Ephesus had not abandoned the doctrinesfor Christ nor the form of godliness. Her failure was in becoming untrue to the Person who is the center and substance of Christianity. The church deserted her Lord in the pathway of love. "The virgin purity of the church was confined to the days of the apostles."--Hegisippus. The machinery of a church may be in perfect working condition, and at the same time love and love-works be on the decline.

The Warning. v. 5. "Remember the height from which you have fallen"-Moffatt. "Be mindful, therefore, of the height"-Weymouth. Lossfor love of Christ is a fall from a high plain to a backslidden condition which needs to be repented of. "Repent and live the life you lived before"-20th C.N.T. "Repent at once and act as you did at first"-Weymouth. There can be no love-works without love. Christians cannot do the first love-works without a return to their first love experience. Works do not produce love, but love always shows itself in works. The relation of Christ and His church is illustrated by that of a bride and bridegroom, or a husband and wife. Loss of love if not regained will eventually prove fatal and end in divorce. A remembrance of the happy love state will bring a desire to return to it. There is no sacrifice or burden in love-service.

The Threat. Unless there was a speedy reformation the Ephesian candlestick would be removed and the church cease to be the light of the world. This was no idle threat for the candlestick had been removed from Israel and because of their loss of love for their Lord. It is the loss of love that forfeits the right and privilege of lightbearing or witnessing for Christ. The testimony of such loses its value and power. "It is the service of love that God values. When this is lacking, the mere round of ceremony is an offense to Him."--D.A. 286.

"It is not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is done, the motive underlying the action, that determines its worth."--Vol. 5:279. "We may be active, we may do much work, but without love, such love as dwelt in the heart of Christ, we can never be numbered with the family of heaven."--C.O.L. 158.

Fatal Results. Love is the supreme grace of the Christian religion and the cooling of that love is the first sign of trouble and the first step toward a general apostasy. "From the gradual decline of first love we have one steady and onward march, till that line of development reaches its climax in the scarlet woman."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 183. The church that started out as the light of the world finally led the world into the dark ages. The candlestick was removed.

Further Praise. v. 6. "Still you have this in your favor."--Moffatt. The word Nicolaitanes means those who vanquish or conquer the people or the laity. Paul had warned that wolves in sheep's clothing would arise in the Ephesian church and "draw away disciples after them", "not sparing the flock". See Acts 20:29-31. The "mystery of iniquity" had already begun to work. 2 Thes. 2:3-7. The exaltation of the clergy exercising lordship over the laity was already doing its baneful work in the apostolic church. Some believe that the Nicolaitanes were the followers of one Nicolas. They were a sect of Gnostics who taught impure doctrines and lived impure lives. They believed in and practiced polygamy and taught that it was lawful to eat food sacrificed to idols. "Thou hatest" and "I also hate". Hate is the reverse of love and there is a hate that is true to love. See Heb. 1:9.

The Appeal. v. 7. This appeal is seven times repeated. The voice of Christ is also the voice of the Holy Spirit. They are the two Witnesses. The appeal includes all who hear today. It indicates that all seven churches were to profit by all the messages. To refuse to listen will lead to the unpardonable sin. It is dangerous to close the ear to such an appeal. Illustration of a man in China who placed his hands over his ears so as not to hear. See Zech. 7:11,12.

The Reward. "To the conqueror"-E.D. The seven promises taken together make up the most complete description of the good things lost through disobedience and to be regained through faith. Where is Paradise? Rev. 22:1,2,14. Man had the right once to the tree of life. Again he is to return to his long lost Eden home and again have the right to its glories. This is a mighty and eloquent appeal for repentance and faithfulness.

Modern Application. History repeats itself and the church today is in the same sad condition. "I am instructed to say that these words are applicable to Seventh-day Adventist churches in their present condition. The love of God has been lost, and this means the absence of love for one another."--C.O.R.152. "The church lost her first love. She became selfish and ease-loving. The spirit of worldliness was cherished....Is not the same thing repeated in this generation?"--Vol. 8:26. Many are regaining their first love.

Memory Text: Rev. 2:7.

SMYRNA THE PERIOD OF PERSECUTION

12

Message to Smyrna. Rev. 2:8-11. Smyrna was the next city and church of importance and was the nearest to Ephesus, being about forty miles north. For this reason the church of Smyrna received the Apocalypse next. It was probably delivered by one of the members of the church of Ephesus after it was read there. This message also has a threefold application, to the city, the local church, and the Smyrnan period of the universal church.

Meaning of Smyrna. "Smyrna" is synominous with "myrrh" which was an aromatic ointment which was used sometimes as a healing balm but more especially for embalming the dead. One of its chief ingredients was made by bleeding or crushing a plant by the same name. This thorny plant or tree grows in Arabia and to some extent in Palentine. It was very bitter to the taste but had a fragrant odor and the more it was crushed the more fragrant the odor. In this respect it is like the myrtle and the leaves of other plants. Examples of its use in connection with the dead are found in John 19:39,40 and other places. The name implies a bitter persecution which proves a blessing.

Speaker's Introduction. v. 8. "He who died and has returned to life"-Weymouth. A very appropriate introduction to the church of martyrs. If they will "be faithful unto death" they will be given "a crown of life". Smyrna would be crushed by cruel persecutions but anointed with fragrance in a death which would end in a resurrection or renewal of life. See Rev. 1:18. While the persecution would be bitter to the victim it was certain to bring out the fragrance of the life of Christ. Smyrna was to be crushed but not permanently killed. There would be a new life. This message was a great encouragement to the persecuted Christians of this period. It was the persecution that made fragrant the life of Jesus and made Him a worthy example of of patience under tribulation. See John 15:18-20; 1 Peter 2:20-23. "From the desert to Calvary, the storm of Satan's wrath beat upon Him, but the more mercilessly it fell, the more firmly did the Son of God cling to the hand of His Father, and press on in the blood-stained path. All the efforts of Satan to oppress and overcome Him, only brought out in a purer light His spotless character."--D.A. 758.

City of Smyrna. Smyrna was one of the oldest cities of the world with a very eventful history. The city is located at the head of a beautiful bay or arm of the Aegean Sea about 30 miles from the coast line and at the mouth of the Meles River. On its coins have been found the inscription, "The Ornament of Asia". It was one of the finest cities of Asia rivaling Ephesus to the South and Pergamos to the North. It was claimed as the birthplace of Homer. It was celebrated for its schools of science and medicine, for its fine library, temples, sacred festivals and games. On the slopes of Mount Pagus was a theatre seating 20,000 people, the ruins of which are still visible. In A. D. 23 a magnificant temple was built by, and dedicated to, the emperor Tiberius.

The Crown of Smyrna. Mount Pagus is a conical mound between 500 and 600 feet high and was located in the center of the ancient city. Its summit was crowned with a shrine dedicated to Nemesis the Greek goddess, a local form of Artemis. Circling the foot of the mount was one of the finest streets of the ancient world called "the Street of Gold". It circled the mount "like a necklass on a stature". Because of its splendor and its garland of fine buildings it was known as "The Crown of Smyrna". When Appollonius visited the city he advised the proud citizens to prefer a crown of splendid men rather than a crown of magnificant buildings. The city itself was called"The crown of Ionia". The promise of Jesus, "I will give you a crown of life", had a peculiar and forceful meaning to the members of the church of Smyrna.

The Persecuted City. The city of Smyrna has suffered all through her history from sieges, massacres, earthquakes, fires, and plagues. In 600 B. C. the Lydians captured and almost completely destroyed the city. It lay partially in ruins for 400 years. It was crushed almost to death but was rebuilt by the Greeks and again became a flourishing city. It was restored to life. It was destroyed by a terrible earthquake in A.D. 178, only 80 years after the church received this letter. It was again crushed to death but was destined to recover for it is "the city of life". It was restored to more than its former beauty and glory by the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. There has seldom been a period of two years without an earthquake. The city was almost destroyed by one in 1688 when the earth opened and swallowed up 5000 people. In 1758 a plague almost depopulated the city and in 1923 the Turks captured and partially destroyed it.

The City of Life. Smyrna is the only one of the seven cities that retains anything of its ancient standing. It is today the largest city of Asia Minor and is the commercial center of the Lavant. According to the 1929 Atlas its present population is 375,000. More than 7,000 ships of all nations visit its beautiful harbor each year and its annual trade reaches to the value of many millions of dollars. One of its chief exports is the famous Smyrna figs. It also exports large quantities of cloth.

The Local Church. The church of Smyrna was repeatedly crushed by bitter persecutions and several times was practically destroyed, but has always been restored to life. It felt the full force of the pagan Roman persecutions. It was the scene of Polycarp's labors and martyrdom in 168 A. D. The hillside of Mount Pagus where Polycarp was burned at the stake has since been reddened with the blood of 1500 Christians at one time and 800 at another. Visitors are shown the spot where Polycarp was martyred and the tomb where he was buried.

see p.48

Subsequent Persecutions. Timur the Tartar Chiefton captured the city of Smyrna in A.D. 1402, and massacred most of its inhabitants especially the Christians. Tradition says he built a pyramid of the heads of his victims. Smyrna was the last Christian city to hold out against the Turks. When they captured it in 1424 they put to death most of the Christians. The Massacre of 1923 is still fresh in our memories. But the local church of Smyrna still lives. The city is the headquarters of several denominational mission enterprises. Located there are a number of Christian schools. More Christians live in Smyrna than any other Turkish city in the world. The local church will doubtless continue till Jesus returns.

The Smyrna period. "Then came the Smyrna period--the era of martyrdom, and of the sweet savor unto God of faithfulness unto death, but marked with further developments of defection in the establishment of casts and orders, the license of Judaizing propensities, and consequent departures from the true simplicities of the Gospel."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 142. The Smyrna period covered about 200 years or the second and third centuries. It was the martyr age when the pagan Roman emperors attempted to destroy Christianity which was considered a form of treason against Rome.

Period of Martyrdom. Smyrna was the church of Myrrh or Bitterness, and yet it was agreeable and precious to Christ. It is represented as persecuted unto death and lying embalmed in the precious spices of its suffering. The Lord permitted Satan to crush the church so as to release the fragrance of love and grace that He might save it from the sins of the Ephesian period. "During this persecution the alabaster box of Christian fragrance was broken and the perfume has filled the centuries." Never since apostolic days was the church so pure and its testimony so clear. Christ assured them that He knew their state of "tribulation and poverty"; that their property was confiscated and they were declared outlaws of the state.

The True Riches. "But thou art rich". There are different kinds of riches. See James 2:5. They had secular poverty and spiritual wealth. Many of the wealthy of earth are moral paupers and spiritually bankrupt and vice versa. Jesus alone furnishes the true wealth. See Rev. 3:18. The persecution was to them a blessing in disguise. "The forge, the anvil, the crucible, the mortar and pestle, the potter's wheel, the burning fiery furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated, are the friendly and appropriate instruments of grace, rather than the obnoxious instruments of torture."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 76.

False Disciples. v. 9. This is one of the three Scriptures where the name Jew is used to represent the true Christian. See also Rev. 3:9; Rom. 2:28,29. The usual term is "Israelite" which is synonymous with "Christian". See Gal. 3:7,29. The term had its origin the night Jacob wrestled with the angel. We should not be too prejudiced against the word "Jew" because Jesus and all the apostles and prophets were Jews. Jesus said, "salvation is of the Jews". The false disciples are declared to be of "the synagogue of Satan". Satan has a synagogue or church called "Babylon" and is represented by a fallen woman. There is no neutral ground. All who are not of the church of God are of the church of Satan. During the Smyrna period false apostles and disciples were multiplying. The "mystery of iniquity" was working within the church.

Terrible Persecutions. v. 10. The Roman Emperor was the "Pontifex Maximus" or chief pontiff of the pagan Roman religion. The word "pontiff" is from the word "pons" or "pontis", meaning bridge. He is the keeper of the bridge between earth and heaven. The emperor was the "protector of the Roman gods". Beginning with Nero, Domitian and Trajan, ten emperors attempted to stem the rising time of Christianity. The last and most bloody of these persecutions was by Diocletian which lasted ten years between 302 and 312 A.D. Dr. Adam Clarke and others believe that the ten days tribulation mentioned in this text especially refers to these ten years, "a day for a year", (Ex. 4:6). The devil is made responsible for the persecution of this period. See also Rev. 12:13,14. It was during this period that the catacombs of Rome were filled with the martyred dead.

No Reproof. Smyrna and Philadelphia are the only two of the seven churches that receive no condemnation. But while there is no complaint of the Smyrna church, no special works of achievement are enumerated. The Christians of this trying period were in need of encouragement. They had all they could stand without reproof. The persecution purified the church and returned it to the love that was lost. Thus will the remnant of the church be purified. See Rev. 7:13,14. "He suffers no affliction to come upon the church but such as is essential for her purification, her present and eternal good. He will purify His church even as He purified the temple at the beginning and close of His ministry on earth. All that He brings upon the church in test and trial comes that His people may gain deeper piety and more strength to carry the triumphs of the cross to all parts of the world."--Vol. 9:228.

The Reward. "Be faithful to the end even if you have to die, and then I will give you the victor's wreath of life."--Weymouth. To such a church of martyrs Jesus declared himself to be the one who had also died a martyr's death but was again alive. v. 8. Death for Christ is victory and all who are faithful till death will be given the crown of life. Nero lost his crown and Paul his head but Paul died with the hope and assurance of a resurrection when he would receive a crown of life. See 2 Tim. 4:7,8. When Polycarp was being martyred at Smyrna he was asked by the judge to renounce Christianity and Christ, He answered: "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me wrong; how then can I blaspheme my King, who hath saved me." He was faithful unto death. Those who are faithful unto the first death will escape the second death which is eternal and from which there will be no resurrection.

Memory Text: Rev. 2:11.

PERGAMOS THE EPOCH OF STATE RELIGION

13

Message to Pergamos. Rev. 2:12-17. Pergamos or Pergamum was located about 40 miles north of Smyrna on the imperial highway along the coast of Asia. It was fifteen miles from the sea on the little river Caicus, a branch of which, the Selimus, flows through the present city of Bergma which has a population of about 12,000. The city of Pergamos was built, settled and named by the AEolian Greeks soon after the fall of Troy in the 12th century B. C., making it one of the oldest cities of Asia and of the world.

The Name. The city was named for the height or elevation on which it was built. Pergamos means a tower, height, or elevation, and carries with it the idea of exaltation. The hill on which the ancient city was built and from which it took its name was an immense rock rising 1000 feet abruptly out of the broad and fertile valley. The walls of the elevation were almost perpendicular except one narrow passage which was steep and easily fortified and guarded. Because of its natural defense the city of Pergamos was considered an impregnable fortress to all attacks. The only way it was ever captured was by strategem. There Lysimachus deposited $10,000,000 because he considered it the safest place in his kingdom.

A Famous City. Pergamos was also known as "The City of Temples". One writer called it, ""A pagan cathedral city, a university town, and a royal residence." It was the educational center of Western Asia. There Homer, the oldest poet, and Herodotus, the father of history, studied and wrote. The city was famous because of its library which according to Plutarch contained 200,000 volumes. It was second only to the world-famous library of Alexandria. Between the two cities there was a long and bitter rivalry. Egypt in order to stem the growth of the Pergamum library withheld shipments of papyrus from which paper was made. To meet the emergency the Pergamums dressed the skins of animals on which to do their writing and called it Pergamus. Later it became known as parchment. The rivalry ended when Mark Antony removed the Pargamum library to Alexandria and gave it to Cleopatra.

A Capital City. "A royal city" exclaimed Sir William Ramsey at first sight of the ruins. It was indeed a "royal city" and "a royal residence". It was the seat of kingly power for 500 years beginning in 282 B. C. It was first the royal city of the Attalid kings and later of the kingdom of Pergamum. For 250 years it was the official residence of the Roman governor of the province of Asia. From Pergamos the decrees of the Caesar's were executed for the province. This gives meaning to Christ's introduction. "These are the words of Him who wields the sharp sword with the double edge."-Moffatt. The broad, double-bladed Roman sword was called "the cut and thrust sword". It was the emblem of the highest official authority carrying with it the power of life and death and this power was vested in the Proconsuls of the province who lived at Pergamos and wielded the sword of Rome.

Throne of Satan. v. 13. "I know where you dwell; Satan's throne is there"-Weymouth. "Where Satan sits enthroned"-Moffatt. "Where the throne of the adversary is"-Emphatic Diaglott. "Throne" is a better rendering that "seat". The same original word is translated "throne" in Rev. 1:4 and 3:21. The capital of the province was also the headquarters of the pagan religions of Asia, for under Rome and all ancient nations church and state were united. The ruler of the state was also the head of the religion of the state. Satan was the prince of the world and ruled through human governments which he has controlled through his false system of religion. The city of Rome was then his earthly throne. See Rev. 13:2. Caesar who ruled the world as Satan's agent was also the "Pontifex Maximus" or supreme pontiff of the pagan religion. He was "the protector of the Roman gods". What could be said of Rome and of Caesar could also be said of the capital and proconsul of each province.

Seat of Paganism. Pegamos was a city of heathen temples and a pantheon of pagan worship. Jupiter was said to have been born there and to him and other Greek and Roman gods were erected and dedicated many beautiful temples giving it the name of the "city of temples". It was the metropolis of pagan deities. There was a maxim among the Jews that where the law of God is not studied and obeyed there Satan dwells. In Pergamos paganism reigned supreme with its impure and licentious rites.

The Serpent God. The temple of Zeus was the most celebrated of all the temples of Pergamos and was dedicated to the "serpent god" who was also known as "the saviour". In the temple a living serpent was kept and worshiped. Serpent worship was so universal in Pergamos that many coins have been found with a picture of a serpent entwined around a pole. This is still the emblem of healing and many miracles were supposed to have been performed in this temple. In connection with it was a famous school of medicine where rites were celebrated in honor of Æsculapius, the Greek god of medicine. Satan is called "that old serpent" and he has ever deceived the world by false miracles of healing. The temple of Zeus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Its ruins have been excavated by archeologists. The temple was built on a stone foundation 16 feet high and 124 by 114 feet. Its altar was made of black marble 40 feet high and covered with beautiful carvings. A replica of this altar is in the museum of Berlin. Bacchus the wine god, and Venus the goddess of lust, were also worshiped in Pergamos.

Religion of Babylon. When Cyrus captured Babylon the supreme ponfiff of the ancient Chaldean Mysteries with his priests fled from the city and ultimately made their residence in Pergamos. Here they re-established their Babylonian worship making the kings of Pergamos also the chief pontiff of their religion. When Attalus III, the last of these priest-kings died in 133 B.C., he bequeathed his royal and priestly offices to the people of Rome. A century later Julius Caesar became both emperor and Pontifex Maximus. He received the divine honors that were later assumed by the Popes. Pergamos, therefore, is the connecting link between the two Babylons, ancient and modern.

The Pergamum Period. Not only does Pergamos mean tower or exaltation but also carries the meaning of marriage or "thorough marriage". The church during this period would be exalted and married to the state. There would be a union of the church with worldly power. Satan had failedto crush the church by persecution and now he changes his policy. Christianity had won in its struggle with paganism and at the close of the third century numbered its adherents by many millions. Satan exalted it to royal favor and made it the religion of the state. Constantine united with the church and revoked all edicts against Christianity and later issued edicts against paganism. The Pergamos period was during the 4th and 5th and part of the 6th centuries, covering about 250 years. It was during the paganising and exaltation of the church to kingly power and authority.

The Papal Power. This was the period of transition from pagan to papal Rome when the church became that royal city "which reigneth over the kings of the earth". (Rev.17:18). "The Pergamite period, in which true faith more and more disappeared from view, and clericalism gradually formed itself into a system, and the church united with the world, and Babylon began to rear its lofty head."-"The Apocalypse", Joseph A Seiss, Vol. 1, p.143. Constantine was the chief instrument used by Satan to bring about this union. "The gratitude of the church has exalted the virtues and excused the failings of a generous patron who seated Christianity on the throne of the Roman world; and the Greeks who celebrate the festival of the imperial saint seldom mention the name of Constantine without adding the title of 'equal to the apostles.'"--Gibbon.

Baptized Paganism. During this period Paul's warnings and prophecy applied. See Acts 20:29,30; 2 Thes. 2:3,4. Christianity was so changed by heathen influences that it virtually became "baptized paganism". During this time Isa. 2:2,3 was fulfilled and the church was established "in the top of the mountain" or government of Rome where she dictated the laws of the land and because of her popularity "all nations flowed into it." The bishop of Rome assumed the title of Pope or supreme pontiff or Pontifex Maximus and declared himself to be the supreme ruler of both church and state.

Christ's Message. Christ appears as heaven's messenger to the Pergamos church wielding the sharp sword with two edges. This indicates His authority to speak a message of life and death. "I know where you dwell" indicates an intimate acquaintance with every member and home environment. Ananias was told that Saul was praying in the house of Judas on the street called Straight. Cornelius was told that Peter could be found in Joppa in the house of Simon the tanner who lived by the sea shore. Their dwelling place at the very headquarters of Satan was taken into consideration. All such things will be taken into account in the judgment. See Ps. 87:4-6. There will be no excuse for failure or defeat. Christ commended the church for faithfulness during the Smyrnan period of persecution and martyrdom when Antipas a prominent member and leader was martyred. This is the only mention of the name of Antipas.

Reproof. v. 14,15. The church was rapidly drifting. In the Ephesian period they refused to tolerate evil doers and hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. Now they tolerate them in their midst and listen to their teachings. "Some cling to the teachings of Balaam"-Weymouth. Balac was the king of Moab and Balaam was the prophet of God who turned traitor to secure worldly honor and gain. He failed to curse Israel but at Baal-Peor led them into the sins of idolatry and fornication. See Num. 25. Nikalaos means "those who conquer the people" or Laiety. The forces were working that conquered the church and turned it into a system of semi-paganism that ruled with royal power.

The Warning. v.16. "Repent at once"- Weymouth. "Reform.. if not.... I will fight" - E.D. "I will contend with such men with words that will cut like a sword."-20th C.N.T. With a drawn sword the angel of the Lord withstood Balaam to thwart his evil purpose against Israel. Christ represents Himself as addressing Pergamos with a drawn sword and all who refuse to listen to His cutting message will share the fate of Balaam who was slain with a sword.

The Reward. v.17. A pot of manna was placed or hidden in the ark. The manna mentioned in our text was not like the common daily manna of the wilderness that perished, but this "hidden manna" was incorruptible and imperishable. It represented the "incorruptible word of God" which "liveth and abideth forever". See 1 Peter 1:23; 2:2. This was the manna on which Jesus subsisted. John 4:32-34. To the church He is "the true bread from heaven", the "hidden manna". John 6:32-35. "The Jews use three special cakes in the Passover Supper which successively represent the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When, in the course of the supper, the middle cake, representing the Son, is reached, it is broken in two and one half is hidden under a pillow of the couch. Later on this is brought to light by the head of the family and a portion of it distributed to each person as a surprise and as a most precious morsel in figure of the broken Son of God."-"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 79.

The White Stone. "White pebble"-E. D. Judges used white and black stones or pebbles in making decisions, the white meaning acquittal and the black condemnation. The Christian victor will be acquitted by the supreme court of heaven. "A custom was of old, and still remains, Which life or death by suffrages ordained; White stones and black within an urn are cast, The first absolves, but fate is in the last"--Dryden. White stones also were given to gladiators or victors in games in Greece and Rome with their names inscribed on them. These entitled them to maintainance at public expense the remainder of their lives. They were also used as tickets and badges of friendship. They were called "tessara". It was also a custom to carve on them the name of the devotee's god which was learned for the first time when the person was initiated into the mysteries. The name must be kept secret under pain of death. The Christian victor will be given a passport to heaven; he will be given a new name to fit his new character; he will be absolved from guilt; he will be given angel's food and the right to the tree of life; his friendship with Christ will be eternal.

Memory Text: Rev. 2:17

THYATIRA THE AGE OF PAPAL SUPREMACY

14

The City. Thyatira was about 25 miles southeast of Pergamos. It was founded by Seleucus Nicator, general of Alexander the great and the first king of the North. It thus became a Macedonian city. It was a garrison city built on the plain with no natural fortifications. It was captured, destroyed and rebuilt a number of times. On coins found in its ruins the city is represented by a horseman bearing a double-headed battle ax indicating that it was a cavalry post. The name is said to signify, "sweet savor of labor", or "sacrifice of contrition". The present population is about 12,000 with a Turkish name meaning "White Castle".

A Laboring City. Thyatira was a manufacturing city and its citizens were mostly poor and humble, just the opposite of those in Pergamos. They were made contrite by sacrifices and their lives were made fragrant by the blessings of labor. Labor is one of man's greatest blessings and for this reason the Lord cursed the ground after the fall. The workmen were organized into unions or guilds. The two leading industries were the manufacture of instruments of brass, bronze and other metals, and the manufacture and dyeing of cloth. Three inscriptions have been found mentioning "dyers". Agents went to all parts of the world selling cloth made in Thyatira. See Acts 16:14. Large quantities of purple and scarlet cloth are still shipped to Smyrna.

Guilds and Idolatry. "In the existing state of society it was impossible to dissociate membership of a guild from idolatry, and the idolatry was a kind that by its symbolism and its efficacy exerted great influence on its adherents, making them members of a unity which was essentially non-Christian and anti-Christian. In the second place, the common banquets were celebrated amid circumstances of revelry and enjoyment that were far from conducive to strict morality, as is evident from representations of the feasts in such clubs."--Sir William Ramsey.

Writer's Introduction. v. 18. "Eyes like flaming fire"-20th C.N.T. "Whose eyes flash like fire and whose feet glow like bronze"--Moffatt. This language was very familiar to the Thyatirans who labored in foundaries with their flaming furnaces where they made articles of fine brass and bronze and other metals. During this period Jesus traveled everywhere and saw everything. Nothing escaped His pierving, penetrating gaze and there was a great deal to see that would make His eyes blaze with indignation. Jesus calls Himself "the Son of God", the only time in the seven letters and in the entire book. During this period His place and authority were usurped by the symbolic Jezebel. The apostatized church failed to recognize and honor Him and assumed authority that belonged alone to the Son of God. To Thyatira was sent the longest of the seven letters and it covers the longest of the seven periods of church history, about one thousand years or half of the Christian era.

Papal Supremacy. v. 19, 20. The Thyatirian period of the universal church covers the reign of the papacy during the middle ages from 538 to the Protestant Reformation. "Then came the Thyatirian period--the age of purple and glory for the corrupt priesthood, and of darkness for truth; the age of effeminacy and clerical domination, when the church usurped the place of Christ, and the witnesses of Jesus were given to dungeons, stakes and inquisitions; the age of the enthronement of the false prophetess, reaching to the days of Luther and the Reformation."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 143.

Spiritual Jezebel. Some believe that Thyatira is equivalent to thygatira meaning a daughter and indicates feminine oppression; that the church would be led into apostasy by a woman and embrace the power of an adultress. It is generally thought that the local church of Thyatira was seduced by a woman who claimed to be a prophetess. Jezebel was the daughter of the king of Sidon who married Ahab the king of Israel. She brought with her the religion of the Phoenicians and led Israel into idolatry. She imported 850 prophets of Baal, the sun-god and chief deity of the Sidonians. In corruptness Jezebel was comparable to Semiramis and Cleopatra. "Jezebel means 'the chaste one', and also, 'a dunghill'. The Papacy claims to be the bride of Christ, but in reality is a dunghill of vileness and corruption."--A. C. Gabelein.

The Scarlet Woman. Rev. 17:4-6. This is doubtless the same symbolic woman. She is dressed in purple and scarlet, the predominent colors in the cloth manufactured in Thyatira. "For such Protestant expositors as see the Papacy in the scarlet woman of Babylon, the Jezebel of Thyatira appears exactly at the right time, coincides with the Papacy at its height, yet at the same time with judgment at the door in the great revolt which was even then preparing."--"Trench on the Seven Epistles", p. 310. The papacy claims to speak with prophetic gift and divine authority and calls herself "the oracle of God". Like Jezebel of old the papacy led modern Israel into idolatry and brought about a union of church and state. She became the spokesman for the world for more than a millennium.

Time of Persecution. Dan. 7:21,25; Rev. 12:6,14; 17:6. It was during this period that Matt. 24:21 was fulfilled. When Jezebel ruled Israel all but 7000 apostatised and they had to flee to the mountains and hide in caves. A price was set on the head of Elijah, the Martin Luther of Ancient Israel. The undisputed rule of Jezebel was three and a half years which was a time of darkness and drought. It was the "dark ages" of Israel's history. It ended in a reformation led by Elijah, Elisha, Jehu, and others. The reformation came to a standstill and was not completed till apostolic times which brought the early rain. Spiritual Jezebel likewise ruled the world for three and a half prophetic years which was a time of great spiritual drought and darkness and persecution. God's loyal people had to flee to the mountains and remain in hiding. Almost all the world obeyed the papal power except the few who fled into hiding or suffered martyrdom.

1260 yrs

An Appropriate Symbol. "And in all history there is not another character which so completely represents the Papal system--its character, work and worship--as the unclean wife of Ahab, the Jezebel of these Epistles. She was a heathen, married to a Jew; and such is the character of the Papal system in its main elements--Paganism joined to an obsolete Judiasm. She is described as calling herself a prophetess, and as undertaking to be the teacher of God's servants; and Popery claims and professes to be heaven's only infallible teacher of God's truth....She was a persecutor and murderess of God's prophets and witnesses; and the Papacy is marked by nothing more than its severity towards such as stood out against its impious pretenses, and its public and secret tortures and butcheries of the saints."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, pp. 194, 195.

The Jezebel Family. v. 23. In Rev. 17:5.the "children" are described as "daughters" of the harlot "Mother". "This Jezebel is also described as having 'children', alike with her unsatisfactory to Christ; and whence but from that unclean source have we those semi-Papal national religious establishments, by which the church of Jesus is befouled, hindered and disgraced, even in many Protestant countries? We thus obtain from these Epistles Christ's own verdict upon Romanism, both in its more offensive features in the old mother, and in its more modified forms in the daughters."--Id. p. 196.
The apostate church includes not only Papal Rome but all that commit fornication with her and all who follow her example.

Sun Worship. In Thyatira was a great temple dedicated to Apollo, the sun-god, who was their chief deity, just as the sun-god, Baal, was the chief god in the apostasy led by Jezebel. Sun-worship is the foundation of all pagan worship which was perpetuated in the papal apostasy. The papacy forsook the Sabbath of Jehovah the memorial of creation, and made the sun's day, or Sunday, their day of worship. In the temple of Apollo was an altar or shrine to a goddess or female deity who was the spokesman or high priestess of Apollo, just as Jezebel was the high-priestess of Baal, and the papacy of the semi-paganism of the middle ages. "Pagan life was transformed to Christian veins, heathen pomp and ceremony commingled with Christian rites and sacraments, and the professed Bride of Christ transformed into a queenly adultress, the harlot mother of a harlot household."-Id. p. 194.

The Reformation. According to verse 19 there came a change for the better towards the close of the period. "I know that of late you have toiled harder than you did at first"--Weymouth. "I know that your life of late has been better than it was at first."-20th C.N.T. During the Reformation the apostate church was given an opportunity to repent and reform as indicated in verse 21. Martin Luther, the Elijah of the 16th century, with the assistance of other reformers broke the power of spiritual Jezebel and brought to an end the three and a half prophetic years of spiritual darkness and drought. "The Saviour almost names the great souled men who led in that glorious work."-Id. p. 197. The reformation came to a standstill till God's final message and the latter rain are given.

Threatened Judgment. v.22,23. "I will cast her upon a bed of sickness and I will severely afflict those who commit adultery with her."--Weymouth. "I will lay her upon a sick bed and bring her paramour (unlawful lover) into sore distress."--Moffatt. The bed of sin becomes the bed of sufferings and punishments. The unlawful union of church and state brought its terrible rewards to both church and state. Elijah said to Jezebel: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." (1 Kings 21:19). The weapons of Jezebel and the papacy were turned upon their own heads. See Rev. 13:10. Ahaziah, Jezebel's son, became a cripple from a fall and spent the remainder of his life on the bed of affliction in great anguish. The whole family was exterminated as the Lord decreed. The two sons who became kings were slain and seventy others put to death. Spiritual Jezebel and her family will be utterly destroyed, also "I will exterminate her children"-Moffatt. "I will kill her children with pestilence."--R.V. note. Doubtless this refers to the seven last plagues.

Admonition to Reformers. v. 24, 25. "But to you I say, to the rest that are in Thyatira"-R.V. The remainder of the epistle is addressed to the faithful who have espoused the cause of the Reformation and had "not known the deep things of Satan"-R.V. "The deep mysteries of Satan"-20th C.N.T. Satan's religion is called the "mystery of iniquity" and his church, "Mystery, Babylon the Great". "None other burden" was to be given the faithful of the Thyatirian period than to "only hold fast to that you have received until I come."--20th C.N.T. The coming here doubtless refers to Christ's coming to execute the threatened judgment. Then more light would be given and more responsibility enjoined. See Rev. 11:2,3. They were to hold the light they had and more would be given later. It also indicates the approach of Christ's coming which would follow the reign of Jezebel. See 2 Thes. 2:3,4.

The Reward. v. 26-29. "He who conquers and is careful to live My life to the end."-20th C.N.T. "Obeys my commands to the very end"-Weymouth. "Lays to heart what I enjoin"-Moffatt. To conquer is not enough, we must maintain the victorious life to the end of the conflict. Matt. 24:13. "I will give you authority over the nations"-Moffatt. The tables are to turn and the saints who have been pilgrims and strangers on earth will inherit the earth. "I will grant him to see the Morning Star"-Moffatt. Jesus is the "bright and morning star" who is to arise in the hearts of all who take heed to the sure word of prophecy. See Rev. 22:16; 2 Peter 1:19. Wycliffe in the 14th century and Savonarola in the 15th century were morning stars of the Reformation. They were beacon lights heralding the dawn of a new day of light and truth and liberty when the Morning Star would give place to the Sun of Righteousness and the perfect day. The Thyatira period was to be followed by the Reformation.

Memory Text: Rev. 2:26,28.

SARDIS THE REFORMATION PERIOD

15

Message to Sardis. Rev. 3:1-6. Sardis means "those escaping" or "that which remains". The name, the message, and the subsequent history of the city and church indicates a good start but a bad finish, a change for the worse. Sir William Ramsey calls it the "city of death". The history is just the opposite of Smyrna which "was dead and is alive", the "city of life." Sardis had "a name that thou livest, but art dead." Like Ephesus, the city and church of Sardis began with a glorious history and ended in a heap of ruins.

The City. Sardis was founded in the 12th century B. C. and was among the oldest and most important cities of Asia. Until captured by Cyrus in 549 B. C. it was the capitol of the kingdom of Lydia and became so again after the fall of the Roman power in Asia in 395 A. D. Lydia was one of the richest kingdoms of the old world. The Lydians were the inventors of coined money. Speaking of their wealth the historian says: "A great cause of the prosperity and wealth of the Lydian kingdom was the natural fertility of the country. No other of all Asia Minor had so rich a soil."--"History of the World", Ridpath, Vol. 1, p. 231. Croesus, the reigning king when Cyrus captured Sardis, was famed for his wealth. Lydia was one of the three symbolic ribs in the mouth of the symbolic bear of Dan. 7. Solon the great Athenian legislator spent some years in Sardis during the reign of Croesus. He was one of the seven wise men of Greece.

A Strong Fortress. The ancient city was built at the foot of Mount Tomolus whose height is 6,700 feet. Near the base of this mountain is a plateau of crumbling rock rising 1000 feet above the plain and on this plateau stood the city. The walls of the elevation were almost perpendicular and the city inaccessible except by one narrow passage which was steep and narrow and strongly fortified. At the base of the cliff flows the little Pactolus River, famous for its golden sands. Sardis was considered an impregnable fortress. From here Cyrus marched against Artaxerxes. On the plains around Sardis encamped the mighty hosts of Xerxes before their march into Greece to find a sepulcher at Marathon. In 1402 A.D. Timur destroyed the city and it was never rebuilt. A miserable little village near by still goes by the name of Sart.

Citizens Overconfident. The natural defenses made the guard and citizens proud and over confident. The walls were carelessly guarded with sometimes fatal results. Because of the failure of the guards to watch, Cyrus captured the city by strategem in 549 B. C. just as he did the city of Babylon 11 years later. On a dark night one of his soldiers climbed the bluff by means of a crack in the rock and with a rope ladder a small army reached the heights and were within the city before the over-confident guards were aware of their presence. 350 years later the city was again taken by strategem by Antiochus the Great. The failure of the guards to watch caused the downfall of the city. How full of meaning to the church was Christ's admonition to watch lest He come upon them as a thief in an hour when they least expected. See verse 3.

The City of Death. Ancient Sardis is now a heap of ruins with no signs of life. It is the city of death. Emerson wrote of his visit to the ruins: "There were more varied and vivid remembrances associated with the sight of Sardis, than could possibly be attached to any other spot on earth; but all were mingled with a feeling of disgust at the littleness of human glory; all--all had passed away! There were before me the fanes of a dead religion, the tombs of forgotten monarchs, and the palm-tree that waved in the banquet hall of kings; while the feeling of desolation was doubly heightened by the calm, sweet sky above me, which, in its unfading brightness, shone as purely now as when it beamed upon the golden dreams of Croesus."

Unexpected Judgments. There is an old Greek proverb which reads, "The feet of the avenging gods are shod with wool." Thus a failure to watch brought ruin to Sardis. "Through the failure to watch, the Acropolis had been successfully scaled in 549 B.C. by the Median soldier, and in 218 by a Cretan."--"International Standard Bible Encyclopedia." The mountains around Sardis have always been a favorite haunt for thieves who swoop down unexpectedly upon the unsuspecting villagers. No government has been able to fully subdue them even to this day. The country is also subject to frequent earthquakes. Sardis was destroyed by earthquake in A. D. 17 when 12 cities of Asia were laid in ruins. Tiberius gave $500,000 to help rebuild and remitted the taxes for five years. "Thou shalt not know what hour I shall come upon you" was an appropriate warning. Divine judgments approach silently, stealthily, invisibly and unexpectedly.

A Name of Life. When this epistle was written Sardis was waning rapidly but was boastful of a past glorious history. Decay and death were inevitable but the inhabitants refused to recognize it and lived on the city's ancient prestige and glory. Sardis lived in name only. In reality it was dead. It was like Columbia in California which once had a population of between 25,000 and 40,000 and lacked but two votes of becoming the capital of the state. The few citizens remaining among its ruins boast of the life of the city during the gold rush days. It is a "has been".

The Sardis Period. The church of the Reformation is here symbolized. It covers the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries in a special sense but probably includes the entire history of Protestantism to the end of time. "Then came the Sardian period--the age of separation and return to the rule of Christ; the age of comparative freedom from Balaam and his doctrines, from the Nicolaitans and their tenants, from Jezebel and her fornications; an age of many worthy names, but marked with deadness withal, and having much of which to repent; an age covering the spiritual lethargy of the Protestant countries before the great evangelical movements of the last hundred years, which brought us to the Philadelphian era." "The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 143.

That Which Remains. Many authorities believe that Sardis means "remnant" or "an escaped few", and thus represents Protestantism after what was vital in it had evaporated, or with only a few faithful ones remaining. See Verse 4. "A few souls"-Moffatt.

A few would remain faithful during the decadence of Protestantism which left the church with more profession than vital godliness. Protestantism in the beginning was very much alive and acquired a name that has long outlived its spirituality. Dan. 11:32-34 pictures the Reformation when men of God did "exploits" in breaking the papal power and ushering in the dawn of a new day. It also pictures the later popularity of the movement. The success brought a feeling of pride and confidence and the churches hid behind man-made creeds and refused further light. They lived on the reputation of their founders or pioneers and failed to watch, with fatal results.

Partial Reformation. v. 2. "No works of thine perfected"--R.V. "Fully performed"-Emphatic Diaglott. "The works of the Sardians did not come to perfection. Christ does not find them complete before God. What was 'received and heard' was not properly remembered and held. The things which were preserved were left to droop, ready to fall into the embrace of death. The new life that had been engendered was soon enfeebled and brought to languishment. And under the name and boast of life, there was death. The old was not changed, and the new which had escaped out of it was stagnant and lifeless. Evil had gained a new victory on a new field. Christendom had completed a new phase, and was one step further in its process of ripening for ultimate rejection."--Id. p. 184.

The reformation came to a standstill. Refusing to accept more light the church began to lose what had been received. Dr. Philip Schaff in his history, "The German Reformation", Vol. 1, pp. 7,8, says: "The Reformation of the Sixteenth century is not a finale; but a movement still in progress." Sir Robert Peel while Prime Minister of England in 1840 said: "The day is not distant, and it may be very near, when we shall have to fight the battle of the Reformation over again."

The Reformation cannot be complete till God brings His people all the way back to the faith once delivered to the saints by Christ.

A Dead Church. "Men say you are living, though you are dead"-20th C.N.T. "You are supposed to be alive but in reality you are dead."-Weymouth. Every professed Christian by his very profession says that he is alive and has eternal life. He is living on the name of Christ. It is a terrible deception to make this claim and at the same time be dead spiritually, to be a walking, moving corpse making every pretense of life. Like Samson, Protestantism is spiritually dead and "wist not that the Lord had departed". It may have much machinery and every appearance of life and activity. It is a condition of pretense and show "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." To God life is more important that all else. There is nothing wrong in a form of doctrine or service and yet without the presence and power of Christ it is worthless. The sentiment is becoming universal that "Protestantism is dead" and is living on a past reputation.

Ready to Die. This does not represent Protestantism in the best days of the Reformation but after the best in it had disappeared and they held on to the name knowing nothing of its meaning. It applies to the days when modern rationalism denies the faith of the early reformers and is busy killing the faith that remains. The church records of Protestantism are padded with long lists of members who are dead spiritually. There are plenty of works, in fact they have become the all-important thing in religion. But faith is dead and thus they are dead works.

Modern Protestantism. "Protestantism has made no converts to speak of in Europe since the sixteenth century. It shot up in two generations to its full stature, and became an established creed with defined boundaries; and the many millions who in Catholic countries proclaim their indifference to their religion, either by neglect or contempt, do not swell the congregations of Protestant Church or conventicle. Their objections to the Church of Rome are objections equally to all forms of dogmatic and doctrinal Christianity. And so it has come about that the old enemies are becoming friends in the presence of a common foe. Catholics speak tenderly of Protestants as keeping alive a belief in the creeds, and look forward to their return to the sheepfold; while the old Antichrist, the Scarlet woman on the seven hills, drunk with the blood of the saints, is now treated by Protestantism as an elder sister and a valiant ally in the great warfare against infidelity. The points of difference are forgotten; the points of union are passionately dwelt upon, and the remnants of idolatry which the more ardent Protestants once abhored and denounced are now regarded as having been providentially preserved as a means of making up the quarrel and bringing back the churches into communion. The dread of popery is gone. The ceremonial system, once execrated as a service of Satan, is regarded as a thing at worst indifferent, perhaps in itself desirable; and even those who are conscious of no tendency to what they still call corruption are practically forsaking the faith of their fathers, and reestablishing, so far as they can or dare, those very things which their fathers revolted against."--James Anthony Froude.

2/15/45

Lessons For Us. "The messages to the church of Ephesus and to the church of Sardis have been often repeated to me by the One who gives me instruction for His people....We are seeing the fulfilment of these warnings. Never have Scriptures been more strictly fulfilled than these have been....We are in an enemy's country. He who was cast out of heaven has come down with great power. With every conceivable artifice and device he is seeking to take souls captive. Unless we are constantly on guard, we shall fall an easy prey to his unnumbered deceptions....Many today are asleep, as were the disciples. They are not watching and praying, lest they enter into temptation. Let us read and study those portions of God's word that have special reference to these last days, pointing out the dangers that will threaten God's people."--Vol. 8:98-101.

Call to Repentance. v. 3. "Reform"-E.D. The call is for a new reformation, an awakening from death. "Wake up, rally what is still left to you, though it is on the very point of death"--Moffatt. There was danger of losing what had been received. They did lose much of the light of earlier days. Because of their wonderful opportunities for advancement they had no excuse and for them Christ had no praise. They not only are self-deceived but deceive others into thinking they are alive when in God's sight they are dead. Self-deception is a terrible sin.

The Warning. v. 3. See Matt. 24:42-44; Luke 21:34-36; 1 Thes. 5:3-5. The Sardis period reaches to the watching time when Christ would enter the most holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary. "You will certainly not know the hour at which I will come to judge you."-Weymouth. This is the coming referred to in Matt. 24:40-42. The close of probation is the secret event that comes "at a time when ye think not" like the visit of a thief in the night. "A few souls" or a "remnant" had not "soiled their garments" (E.D.) and to them is promised life. In their lives the reformation had been carried on to perfection. There was but little hope of saving dead Sardis which had become a part of Babylon and the remnant must be called out. This proves that there can be living souls even in a dead church.

The Reward. v. 4,5. The Hebrews regarded holiness as a beautiful white robe of the soul and evil actions as stains or spots. (See Shabbath, fol. 152, 2) When a white robed priest committed a sin which disqualified him for the sacred office of priest, the white robe was taken from him and he was given a black robe. His name was also stricken from the sacerdotal register. White is symbolic of purity and victory. See Zech. 3:3-5; Rev. 7:13,14; 19:7,8, 11-14. It was the custom of the early Christians who were candidates for baptism to put on white robes and march in a procession to the place of baptism. This declared to all that they were Christians. This custom still prevails in the South especially among the colored Baptists. See. Mark 9:3.

In Rome. The white toga in Rome was symbolic of joy and triumph and the black robe of mourning and defeat. It was worn by slaves and prisoners. "White robes were worn in the Roman world by candidates for high office and illustrious persons. By tribunes and consuls when marching before the eagles of the legions into battle."--Tacitus History, 11, 85. On days of a Roman triumph all Roman citizens dressed in white so that Rome was called the "White City". "And now the imperial eagle, raised on high, with golden beak, the march of majesty. Trumpets before, and on the left and right, a cavalcade of nobles, all in white."--The Poet Juvenal. A successful candidate for office was clothed in white robes by his friends and marched to the place of his new duties.

The Book of Life. In all Greek and Roman cities the names of the citizens were recorded in a book. New names were added and unworthy names expunged. It was a great privilege to be a citizen. God's book of life contains the names of the citizens of His kingdom. It is the family record. It contains the names of the victors in the warfare against evil. See Rev. 20:12,15; 21:27. The names of backsliders are erased with their good deeds. Ex. 32:32,33; Neh. 13:14. Either our names are blotted from the book of life or our sins from the books of record. Acts 3:19. "I will certainly not blot out his name"-Wey. "I will own him openly"--Moffatt. Matt. 10:32,33. Triumphal procession. Isa. 26:2.

Memory Text: Rev. 3:5.

2/27

THE ERA OF BROTHERLY LOVE

16

Philadelphian Message. Rev. 3:7-12. This is the best of the seven letters revealing the best spiritual condition. It is the church that will be translated when Jesus comes. To it Jesus described Himself as "He that is holy, He that is true". The church is addressed as a small but exceptional company who had remained faithful in the midst of a larger group who had failed. The message indicates a change for the better from the Sardis condition, a renewal of life, love and missionary activity; a resurrection from death.

The City. Philadelphia was located 28 miles southeast of Sardis on the Roman post road. The city was founded in 189 B.C. by Attalus Philadelphus for whom it was named. Some authorities believe that it was so called also because of the love and loyalty between Philadelphus and his brother, the king of Lydia. The city was also known as Decapolis because it was one of the ten cities of the plain. It was also sometimes called "Little Athens" because of the magnificance of its public buildings. Its modern name in Turkish is Alashehr which means "The City of God", or "The Exalted City".

The Location. The city guarded and commanded an important pass through the mountains between the Hermus and Maeander valleys. It was thus the keeper of the key to the gateway to the eastern highlands with the power to open and close according to its will. Christ's introduction therefore had a forceful meaning to the Philadelphians. v. 7,8. He reminded them of other doors to which He alone holds the keys with authority and power to open and close.

The Hour of Trial. The city was subject to frequent earthquakes of which the inhabitants lived in constant expectation. With eleven other cities it was destroyed by the great earthquake of A. D.17. The city was quickly rebuilt but its citizens lived in constant fear of falling buildings. An ancient writer said: "The walls of the houses are incessantly opening, and sometimes one, and sometimes another part of the city is experiencing some damage.".Strabo. The people often fled into the open country and lived in tents or booths for fear of earthquakes. Christ's promise was especially precious, "He shall go no more out". v. 12. Jesus reminded the members of the church of Philadelphia that in the New Jerusalem they would dwell safely and would not live in constant fear of "the day of trial". When the Tartars captured Philadelphia in 1403 A.D. it is said that they built a wall around it with the corpses of their victims.

No Reproof. Suffering Smyrna and tried Philadelphia are the only two that were not rebuked and they alone with the exception of Thyatira remain of the original seven. The present city has a population of 15,000 and about one-third are professed Christians. Philadelphia held out against the Turks long after all the other cities of Asia except Smyrna had fallen. After it was besieged by a powerful Ottoman army in the 14th century and was reduced to the verge of starvation they held out for eleven years before yielding in 1390 A.D. They surrendered on splendid terms.

A Pillar. The courage and heroism of the Christian defenders of the city aroused the admiration of Gibbon. He wrote: "In the loss of Ephesus the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick of the Revelation; the destruction is complete....The circus and three stately theatres of Laodicea are now peopled with wolves and foxes; Sardis is reduced to a miserable village; the god of Mohomet, without a rival or a son, is envoked in the mosques of Thyatira and Pergamos....Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy or courage. At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above four score years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottamans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect--a column in a scene of ruins--a pleasing example that the paths of honor and safety may sometimes be the same."--Gibbon's Rome, Chap. 64.

Gibbon refers to the lone pillar standing like a sentinel amid the ruins of the ancient city. "I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God," is the promise to the Christian victor.

Philadelphian Period. The era of "brotherly love" covered primarily about the first half of the 19th century until the entrance of the Laodicean state. "The Philadelphian era was marked by a closer adherence to the written word, and more fraternity among Christians, but now rapidly giving place to Laodicean lukewarmness."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 143. This condition however must again prevail in the remnant who are translated. The message shows that it reaches the end. The Philadelphian period began with the great foreign mission movement which sent a revival through Protestantism and ushered in an era of love for God and man such as had not been known since apostolic days. Love for their "Elder Brother" led to love for each other.

Era of Foreign Missions. Those who escaped from the dominion of Jezebel and the spiritual deadness of Sardis began to remember how they had received and heard and to repent. Dead Christendom was mightily stirred by great revivals bringing life and love and unity in an effort to evangelize the world. May 31, 1792, William Carey preached his memorable sermon on foreign missions from Isa. 54:2,3. This date is reckoned the birthday of modern missions. The movement spread through all denominations and broke down denominational barriers,

Era of Love. "Thus early the prophetic hope was expressed that this uprising for the world's redemption 'will spread to every Christian bosom, to the Dutch, German, American, and all Protestant churches, till the whole professing world shall burn with fervent love, and labor, to spread in every heathen land the sweet savor of the Redeemer's name.'"--"A Hundred Years of Missions", Leonard, p. 87. On page 86 he says: "This will be ever remembered by us as the era of Christian benevolence."

Dawn of New Day. "In January, 1797, it could be affirmed concerning the religious fervor resulting far and wide; 'Christians in every corner of the land are meeting in a regular manner, and pouring out their souls for God's blessing on the world.' And again: 'The efforts most successfully made to introduce the Gospel to the South Seas have had a most powerful tendency to unite the devoted servants of Christ of every denomination in the bonds of brotherly love, and to awaken zeal to help the perishing multitudes in our own country, and also the Jews."--Id. p. 89. On page 91 the writer says: "It is like the dawn promising the day after the dark night. It is the beginning of a new epoch for the kingdom of God on earth." Robert Morrison went to China in 1807 and Robert Moffatt to Africa in 1817. The British and Foreign Bible Society was organized in 1804 and the American Bible Society in 1816. It was indeed the dawn of a new era.

Culminated in Advent Movement. This great revival of Christian love and foreign mission work led the church to the study of prophecy with the conclusion that the end of the world was near when Jesus would return. Beginning about 1823-28 the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation were studied with the sermon of Christ recorded in Matt. 24. May 19, 1780 the sun had been darkened and the predicted shower of falling meteors fell the night of Nov. 13, 1833. Hundreds of ministers of all denominationa began to preach that Christ would soon return. Based on the 2300 year prophecy of Dan. 8 and 9, many declared that the end would come in 1844. There swept over the Christian world the greatest revival since Pentecost. The believers in the advent hope were brought into a state of love and unity and godliness such as is described in Titus 2:12,13 and 1 John 3:3.

Key of David. A key is the symbol of authority and power and is used to open and close doors. See Isa. 22:22; Luke 1:32,33. Since 606 B.C. when Israel's last independent king, Jehoiakim, was dethroned by Nebuchadnezzar, the house of David and his throne room has been closed and locked. The throne will remain vacant "till He come whose right it is". Eze. 21:25-27. The message indicates that the time is nearing when Christ, the Son of David, will come and take the long vacant throne. This takes place at the second advent, See Matt. 25:31-35.

Other Doors. There are four other doors that Christ alone can open and close. (1) The grave. Rev. 1:18. It indicates that the time is nearing for the resurrection. (2) The door into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. This was opened at the close of the 2300 years of Daniel's prophecy or in 1844. This door is mentioned again in 4:1 and 11:18,19. (3) Doors of missionary opportunity. 2 Cor. 2:12. Philadelphia had its open door through the mountains to the cities of the great tablelands of Asia. The Philadelphian period is that of the open door or missionary age. Early in the 19th century a divine hand began to open to the gospel the great mission fields of the world and no Satanic agencies can close them till the work is finished. Rev. 14:6-14. (4) The door of probation or the door into heaven. See Luke 13:24,25. "No man is able to shut"-E.D.

A World Crisis or Test. v. 10. See Weymouth. This is yet future which is one proof that the Philadelphian condition will be revived. It seems that the last four of the seven churches are to go on side by side till the end. Just before the end the church and the world must pass through the crucible so as to separate the chaff from the wheat, the dross from the gold. There must be a clear distinction between the church and the world. Mal. 3:2,3 pictures Christ as a silver-smith refining and testing His people, burning out the dross till He can see the reflection of His own image in them. "Patiently guarded My word" indicates pressure to cause them to let go. See Rev.12:17; 14:12. Modern skepticism requires that we have much patience in order to hold fast.

The Advent Near. "Behold I come quickly" or "I am coming very soon" (Moffatt) indicates that the advent is at hand. It was indeed very near then but it had to be delayed because of the Laodicean condition. "They all slumbered and slept" is the divinely given cause of the long delay. Matt. 25:1-5. Only those who patiently hold fast to the end will be saved. "Cling to that which you already possess."-Weymouth. According to Heb. 10:35-37 the "word of My patience" seems to have to do with the delayed return of Christ. Because of the delay many cast away their confidence and lose the reward. They do not walk and live by faith.

The Reward. v. 12. A pillar is the symbol of stability and strength. Solomon's temple had two brazen pillars 30 feet high called Jachin ("He shall establish") and Boaz ("It is strength"). "And he never more shall leave it"-20th C.N.T. "He shall never go out from it again."-Weymouth. This pictures an experience in Christian victory that will be permanent when defeat and backsliding will cease. They reach the plain of perfection and victory attained by the disciples in the upper room which brought them the Pentecostal showers of spiritual power.

Permanent Victory. "The faithful, praying ones are, as it were, shut in with God. They themselves know not how securely they are shielded....The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world...Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices."--Vol. 5:475. When this condition is reached the latter rain will fall upon the victors and the multitudes in Babylon will be called out into the light that lightens the earth with its glory.

The Victor's Names. Three names are mentioned. (1) "The name of My God" which comes with the receiving of the character of God. See Rev. 14:1. (2) A "new name" for the individual to correspond to the renewed character. When Jacob's character was changed the Lord changed his name and so with all the redeemed. (3) The "name of the city" of God, the New Jerusalem. With the name of God and His address written on them "the gates of hell shall not prevail to keep the saints from reaching their destination.

Memory Text: Rev. 3:10.

LAODICEA THE PERIOD OF LUKEWARMNESS

17

< The Message. Rev. 3:14-22. The epistle to the church of the Laodiceans is most strikingly significant in the setting of the history of the city. Laodicea was founded by Antiochus II in 261-246 B.C., and named in honor of his wife, Laodice. This is the Antiochus that formed the marriage league with Ptolomy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, in fulfillment of Dan. 11:6. Laodicea was populated with Syrians and Jews transported from Babylon. The city was located on the Lycus River and was distinguished from several others by the same name as being called "Laodicea on the Lycus". It was at the junction of the two post roads from Ephesus and Pergamos running eastward into Syria. The highway entered on the west through the "Ephesian Gate" and left through the "Syrian Gate" on the east. Near the city was a pass in the mountains called the "Gate of Phrygia" of which Laodicea was the guard and doorkeeper. Laodicea was located 50 miles southeast of Philadelphia.

< A Wealthy City. Laodicea was famous for its wealth. In it extensive banking operations were carried on and it had large markets controlled mostly by the Jews of whom there were in the city 7,500 men besides women and children. So wealthy were the citizens that when the city was destroyed by an earthquake in A.D. 60, they refused the help offered by the imperial government and rebuilt at their own expense. This is doubtless the only example of the kind in the history of Rome. Because of their wealth the citizens were proud, self-satisfied and self-conceited. In the light of this situation Christ's statement in verse 17 is full of meaning.

Black Raiment. The city was also noted for the black cloth manufactured there from a valuable wool produced in the valley. The wool was of a soft texture and glossy black color. Black garments, therefore, were almost universally worn by the Laodiceans and of them they were very proud. Christ advised the members of the church to buy of Him "white raiment" which was symbolic of His own righteous character. See v. 18. The people of Leodicea were familiar with the white toga worn by Roman officials and citizens which was symbolic of victory. To wear this white garment was esteemed a high honor.

Health Resort. In connection with the temple of Karu was a renowned school of medicine. This was one of the 200 temples dedicated to AEsculapius, the Greek god of medicine. In this temple was made the famous Phrygian eye-salve which was sold in all parts of the Greek and Roman world. This gives force to the counsel of the Great Physician who advised the spiritually blind Laodiceans to buy of Him eye-salve that they might be given spiritual vision. See v. 18. lw

Mineral Springs. Near the city were a number of hot, cold, and lukewarm springs. Some of them contained minerals with supposed healing properties. Sick people came from all parts of the world to be benefited by the eye-salve, mineral water, and baths. While the water was pleasing to the flesh for bathing, much of it was nauseous and unfit to drink. This makes very fitting the language used by Christ in verses 15, 16.

The Local Church. The church in Laodicea was doubtless established by some of the fellow-laborers of Paul during his three years stay in Ephesus when "all they that dwell in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus". (Acts 19:10). According to Col. 2:1 Paul himself never visited Laodicea. He did send them a letter and asked that it be read to the Colossian church which was about six miles away and that the Colossian letter be read in Laodicea. See Col. 4:13-16. Many of the best Bible students believe that this does not refer to a letter Paul wrote to the Laodicean church which has been lost but rather to his Ephesian letter which he desired read in all the churches of the province. The famous Council of Laodicea was held in 364 A.D. with 32 bishops present. Christ's message was finally rejected and their candlestick removed. The church is no more. The city has long been deserted and most of the stones have been removed to build nearby villages. The ruins of two great theaters are still visible, also the stone acqueduct that brought water to the city which was built by Herod the Great.

The Laodicean Period. This period reaches from 1844 or the middle of the 19th century to the end, or until a mighty revival brings God's people back to the Philadelphian condition of fervent love for God and man. It is a sad picture of modern Christendom. It is a period of compromise and worldly conformity. The church is to be distinguished for its lukewarmness. It is not cold-dead like Sardis. There is spiritual warmth but just enough to nauseate her glorified Head. She is in such a state that Christ cannot keep her on His stomach. His love is so fervid that the half-hearted response of the church is disgusting to Him. He would prefer that she were out and out either frigid or fervid. In her deception the church enjoys a religious contentment that to her is blissful. She knows not her true state.

Time of Judgment. Laodicea means "justice of the people" or better, "judging of the people". The Laodicean message is due during the time of the investigative judgment. The door into the Holy of Holies was opened at the close of the Philadelphian period and will remain open till the solemn work of judgment is finished in heaven and the judgment-hour message is carried to the world. See Dan. 7:9-13; Rev. 14:6-14. According to the prophecy of Dan. 8 and 9 the judgment started in 1844 at the close of the 2300 years. The disappointment or the delay in the second advent left the church in the Laodicean condition in which it has remained. A remnant will accept the counsel of the True Witness and get back their first love which prepares them for the latter rain and translation.

The Modern Church. Dr. Joseph A. Seiss declares that the Philadelphian era is "now rapidly giving place to Laodicean lukewarmness, self-sufficiency, empty profession, and false peace, in which the day of judgment is to find the unthinking multitude who suppose they are Christians and are not."- "The Apocalypse", Vol. 1, p. 143. (Published in 1865). The last of the seven letters applies to the last era of the history of the church militant living in the last generation. Living in the solemn hour of judgment the church should present a far different picture.

The Worldly Church. "It is lukewarm,--nothing decided,--partly hot and partly cold,--divided between Christ and the world,--not willing to give up pretension and claim to the heavenly, and yet clinging close to the earthy,--having too much conscience to cast off the name of Christ, and too much love for the world to take a firm and honest stand entirely on His side. There is much religiousness, but very little religion; much sentiment, but very little of life to correspond, much profession, but very little faith; a joining of the ball-room to the communion-table, of the opera with the worship of God, and of the feasting and riot of the world with pretended charity and Christian benevolence."--Id. pp. 199,200.

Wealthy Church. "And it is self-satisfied, boastful, and empty. Having come down to the world's tastes, and gained the world's praise and patronage, the Laodiceans think they are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. Such splendid churches, and influential and intelligent congregations, and learned, agreeable preachers! Such admirable worship and music! Such excellently manned and endowed institutions! So many missionaries in the field! So much given for magnificant charities! Such an array in all the attributes of greatness and power! What more can be wanted?"--Id. p. 200.

The Introduction. v. 14. This is the only instance in the Bible where "Amen" is used as a proper name. It means "the True One". It also means "so be it" or "it is true". "Amen" comes at the close of a prayer or message and indicates the end. The Laodicean message is the last of the seven and the final warning of Christ to the last or remnant of His church before probation closes. No other will ever follow. This is an appropriate introduction to the last of the seven epistles. All Christ has said to the other churches and all He is about to say to the Laodicean church is true because He is the "faithful and true witness." "These are the words of the Unchanging One."--20th C.N.T. The church may change but Christ never changes. Heb. 13:8; James 1:17. The church has compromised with the world but Christ looks upon it with the same antipathy as in Ephesus, Pergamos and Sardis. The state of Laodicea is not exaggerated.

A True Picture. "And will it answer to say that all this is not largely characteristically the state of things at this very hour? Can any man scrutinize narrowly the professed Church of our day, and say that we have not reached the Laodicean age? Is it not the voice of this Christendom of ours which says: 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing?' And is it not equally the fact that this selfsame Christendom of ours is 'the wretched, and the pitiable, and poor, and blind, and naked?' Did the 'Mene, mene, tekel upharsin' of Belshazzar's palace better fit the ancient heathen than this modern Christian Babylon?"--Id. p. 200.

Dependable Testimony. Jesus introduces Himself as the "faithful and true witness". Such a witness speaks with absolute knowledge and is above misrepresentation. Man often testifies of what he believes but Christ testifies of what He knows. With

Him there is no guesswork and He doesn't gloss over and whitewash conditions to make them appear better than they really are. The Laodicean message is given by the authority of the "two witnesses" Christ and the Holy Spirit. v. 22. When they speak we ought to listen. It is fatal to refuse their testimony. True witnesses are very scarce in this generation of trucebreakers and false accusers. The ninth commandment is almost universally transgressed. But the testimony of Christ and the Holy Spirit is dependable. Whether we believe it or not the Laodicean condition is the true state of the church today.

Message of Creator. Christ introduces Himself as "the beginning of the creation of God". "The origin of God's creation"--Moffatt. "The beginning and Lord of God's creation."-Weymouth. "The Progenitor"-Spanish. This text was used by Arius to disprove the divinity of Christ and to prove that He was a created being. It cannot mean this but rather signifies that all things had their origin and beginning with Him. Christ is the Beginner, Author, Source, Moving Principle of all creation because as the spokesman of the Godhead He called all things into existance. See Heb. 1:12; Eph. 3:9; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:13-16.

Challenge to Modernism. This is a splendid introduction to the church of Christ living in the last generation saturated as it is with the evolutionary theory of the beginning of life and matter. It is a rebuke and challenge to the modern scholastic philosophy that denies the Genesis record. In a faithless and skeptical generation when even most professed Christians give the glory and honor of creation to the creature rather than to the Creator, Christ sends a searching message to His church with the announcement that He is the Creator and Lord of all creation. He intimates that the same mighty power that created and upheld the worlds can recreate and uphold the Laodiceans who accept His counsel. There is complete victory in Him. He is abundantly able to cleanse even from the terrible sins of lukewarmness and self-complacency, and worldly conformity.

Most Appropriate Message. "The key exactly fits the lock, the impression answers to the stamp, the cast bears the precise outlines of the mould; and it would seem to me like trifling with the truth not to admit that, in the mind of Jesus, they belong together. Let us see to it, then, that we hear as the text commands, and learn to view the Church's errors, corruptions, mistakes, and sins, as Christ views them; to love what he loves, to hate what He hates, and to hope only as He has given us authority to hope. And to this may Almighty God grant us His helping grace! Amen."--Id. pp. 202,203.

Another Writer. "The Laodicean church is very evidently the type and also the prophecy of the seventh and last period of our Christian dispensation. And, it is the sincere conviction of many earnest and careful students of God's word, that the church has already entered upon this very Laodicean stage of its development."--"Studies in the Book of Revelation", Lamb, p.114.

Memory Text: Rev. 3:15,16.

Complete Message. The seven epistles completely cover the Christian era and constitute a perfect and complete message to the church of Christ. The reproofs include all the dangers that confront the church and the promised rewards embrace all that was lost through sin. These messages are not sent to the apostate churches after their final rejection but to the most faithful of each period whom Christ claims as His own and who constitute His church or bride. Some of the seals describe apostate Christianity, but not the letters. The Laodicean message if accepted will bring a complete restoration to the favor of God and prepare a people for translation. No other message will be given the church. It is the last.

The Remnant. Since the seven letters are addressed to Christ's own people throughout the Christian era from the days of the apostles to the second advent, then the Laodicean message applies to the remnant of Christ's church in the last days. To deny this would be to deny that we are His people. Just as truly as the three-fold message of Rev. 14 is Christ's last warning message to the world, so the Laodicean message is His last warning to His church. To apply it wholly to other professed Christians or religious bodies and feel that we are not included in the picture is evidence of a terrible deception. It is the Laodicean deception. Bengel's motto should be ours: "Apply thyself wholly to the Scriptures, and apply the Scriptures wholly to thyself."

Spirit of Prophecy. "The testimony to the Laodiceans applies to God's people at the present time, and the reason it has not accomplished a greater work is because of the hardness of their hearts....The heart must be purified from sins which have so long shut out Jesus. This fearful message will do its work.... If the counsel of the True Witness had been fully heeded, God would have wrought for His people in greater power."-Vol.1:186. Written in 1856. "The people to whom God has entrusted the sacred, solemn, testing truths for this time, are sleeping at their post. They say by their actions, We have the truth, we are 'rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;' while the True Witness declares, 'Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' With what fidelity do these words portray the present condition of the church; 'Knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable and poor, and blind, and naked.'"--Vol. 5:101.Written in 1885.

Later Testimony. "If ever there was a people that needed to heed the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodicean church to be zealous and repent before God it is the people who have had opened up before them the stupendous truths for this time, and who have not lived up to their high privileges and responsibilities."--R.H. June 4, 1889.

"The message to the Laodicean church is applicable to our condition. How plainly is the position of those who think they have all the truth, who take pride in their knowledge of the word of God, while its sanctifying power has not been felt in their lives. The fervor of the love of God is wanting in their hearts....The True Witness says of a cold, lifeless, Christless church, 'I know thy works, etc."--R.H. July 23, 1889.

Christ Outside. Rev. 3:20. "Those who claim to believe the truth do not possess that power that God would bestow upon them if they really believed, and were striving for conformity to His image. The Church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst....What a terrible thing it is to exclude Christ from His own temple! What a loss to the church! Our Redeemer sends His messengers to bear a testimony to His people. He says; 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock, etc."--Brown Leaflet, "Education", No. 6, 1898. "The message to the Laodicean church reveals our condition as a people."--R.H. Dec. 15, 1904.

A Terrible Indictment. Rev. 3:14-17. Laodicea receives no praise or commendation. Like Sardis she makes false pretensions and is self-deceived. These are the only two of the seven churches wholly condemned and the only two of the cities wholly deserted. No complaint is made of Laodicea's doctrines. She is not deceived by the teachings of the Nicolaitains, Balaam, or spiritual Jezebel. Her great light and knowledge makes her more responsible than the church in any other period and the malediction is pronounced accordingly. See Matt. 11:20-24. None but drunken or insane persons could be so deceived. The Bible contains no more scathing rebuke than is given Laodicea. It is similar to the message given ancient Israel as recorded in Isa. 1:2-25.

Plenty of Works. "I know thy works" indicates that Laodicea is busy, planning, organizing, raising means, erecting buildings, and establishing institutions. She is busy with programs, campaigns, conventions, social functions, and home and foreign mission extension work. Like Israel and modern Babylon Laodicea is deceived by her many activities. "In the estimation of the rabbis, it was the sum of religion to be always in a bustle of activity. They depended upon some outward performance to show their superior piety. Thus they separated their souls from God, and built themselves up in self-sufficiency. The same danger still exists. As activity increases, and men become successful in doing any work for God, there is danger of trusting to human plans and methods. There is a tendency to pray less, and to have less faith. Like the disciples, we are in danger of losing sight of our dependence on God, and seeking to make a saviour of our activity."--D.A. 362.

Most Hopeless Condition. "Thou knowest not". Self-conceit is one of if not the hardest sins to conquer. "The first and worst of all frauds is to cheat ones self. All sins are easy after that."-Festus. "There is nothing so offensive to God, or so dangerous to the human soul, as pride and self-sufficiency. Of all sins it is the most hopeless, the most incurable."-C.O.L. 154. "No stronger delusion can deceive the human mind than that which makes them believe that they are right, and that God accepts their works, when they are sinning against Him.... They suppose that they are rich, and have need of nothing, when they are poor, wretched, blind, and naked, and need all things."--Vol. 1:407. A recognition of our spiritual poverty is the first step towards the kingdom. Matt. 5:3. Paul received such a vision and it transformed his life. See Rom. 7:24; 8:3. The Pharasee and the Publican in the temple represent both classes or a person before and after he gets a vision of his true state.

Boasts of Wealth. "I am rich and have gotten riches."-R.V. "I am rich and have wealth stored up."-Weymouth. "I am well off"--Moffatt. Laodicea takes all credit for the wealth obtained. She feels abundantly supplied with all the love and faith and truth she needs or will need in the future. The attitude is that there is no more light to be given. Spiritually she is poverty stricken but imagines she is rich; wretched, but feels perfectly satisfied; miserable, but pretends great happiness; blind, but prides herself in wisdom and a clear vision; she is naked or arrayed in filthy rags, but goes about as if on dress parade. "And you do not know that if there is a wretched creature it is you."--Weymouth.

Deceived by Works. We are told that God's professed people today "are more ready for active labor than for humble devotion,-more ready to engage in outward religious service than in the inner work of the heart. Meditation and prayer are neglected for bustle and show....The steady progress of our work, and our increased facilities, are filling the hearts and minds of many of our people with pride and satisfaction, which we fear will take the place of the love of God in the soul."-Vol.4:535. There are two kinds of progress, material and spiritual. It is possible to experience the first without the latter. This deceived ancient Israel and is deceiving modern Israel.

Spiritual Retreat. "The general opinion is that the church is flourishing, and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders. The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader, and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power."--Vol. 5:217. "The work has been extended so that it now covers a large territory, and the number of believers has increased. Still there is a great deficiency....The work is really retrograding instead of advancing as God designs it should. Our present numbers and the extent of our work are not to be compared with what they were at the beginning."--Vol. 6:420.

"But in some respects the work has deteriorated. While it has grown in extent and facilities, it has waned in piety."-Vol. 7:217. This is the picture given in the Laodicean epistle.

True Progress. "If numbers were an evidence of success, Satan might claim the pre-eminence; for, in this world his followers are largely in the majority. It is the degree of moral power.... that is the test of prosperity. It is the virtue, intelligence, and piety of the people composing our churches, not their numbers, that should be a source of joy and thankfulness."--Vol. 5:31,32. "He values His church, not for its external advantages, but for the sincere piety which distinguishes it from the world. He estimates it according to the growth of its members in the knowledge of Christ, according to their progress in spiritual experience. He looks for the principles of love and goodness."--P.K. 565,566. Laodicea is lukewarm and has lost her first love but she knows it not. Very few are willing to acknowledge that they are in this deceived Laodicean condition. Many become angry when the Laodicean message is preached and declare that it does not apply. "Thou knowest not," is the divine verdict regarding her spiritual state.

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Christ's Threat. v.16. The frigid coldness of the non-professor or the entirely dead professor of Christianity was more preferable to Christ than sickening lukewarmness. He demanded that they be real fervid Christians or none at all. There is no middle ground or neutral position that is acceptable. The Laodicean condition is so nauseating to Christ that it produces a feeling of disgust and loathing. He says, "I am about to vomit you out of My mouth."--Emphatic Diaglott. "Before long I will vomit you out of my mouth."-Weymouth. This is no idle threat. The execution has already begun for many individuals. The spueing out will take place on a vast scale during the shaking time when the church is cleansed.

A Love Message. v. 19. "I reprove and discipline those whom I love."-Moffatt. "All whom I hold dear I reprove and chastise."--Weymouth. Christ loves the Laodiceans because they are honestly deceived. "The message ofthe True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God."-Vol. 3:253. This is the one bright spot in the picture and the one gleam of hope. There is hope for a person who is honestly deceived. When the deception is pointed out an honest person will appreciate the counsel and apply the remedy.

His Chosen People. "And in among the sickening lukewarmness, pride, boasting and emptiness of the Laodiceans, there are some chastened ones whom Jesus loves, and some who hear His voice, and open unto Him, and whose destiny is to sit with Him on His everlasting throne....With all the hard things which we are in honesty and fairness compelled to write against the present population of Christendom, God has not left Himself without witnesses, and still has His true people, who have not kissed their hands nor bowed their knees to the reigning idolatry of the times. Earthy and vile as the congest may be, there is gold in it, as there was an Enoch and a Noah in the generation before the flood, and a Lot even in Sodom itself."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, pp. 218-220.

Purified by Chastening. v.19. The message of reproof or rebuke will be followed by chastening or discipline. The Lord's messages of reproof have always been followed by judgments. Chastisement is His last resort but is one of the greatest evidences of His love. See Heb. 12:5-11. By this means Christ learned perfect obedience and submission to His Father's will. Heb. 5:8. Judgments may increase the rebellion of rebels but it also increases the righteousness of the honest in heart. See Isa. 26:9,10. "Pious people, somehow, have ever been afflicted people. It seems to be God's plan to make His children ill at ease in this world, that they may the more earnestly long for that which is to come. The mass of them have been martyrs, living martyr lives, if not dying martyr deaths. The holiest men are always suffering men. There is no saintship which is exempt from trial, sorrow, and this world's frowns."--Id. p. 225. The remnant of the church is to pass through "great tribulation" but from it they emerge with the white robes of Christ's righteousness. Rev. 7:14

Memory Text: Rev. 3:17.

THE LAODICEAN REMEDY

19

316

Laodicea a Sick Church. Sardis was cold and dead but Laodicea is lukewarm and sick. There is some life but her terrible spiritual malady has left her sluggish and only semi-conscious. And worst of all she knows not her danger. Death is at hand unless the remedy is applied but the Laodiceans approach the tomb boasting of life, riches and prosperity. Rev. 3:14-17 is the Great Physician's diagnosis of the spiritual condition of the modern church. It is a true diagnosis for the "Faithful and True Witness" never made a mistake and He never exaggerates. The remedy must be applied soon or it will be too late; the disease will become incurable.

Condition Alarming. The Laodicean message is recorded in the Old Testament in Joel 2:1,12-17. When God sends an alarm message to Zion or the church, conditions are very serious. The situation demands a ministry of tears; a weeping ministry sounding an alarm message to a weeping church. It is such a message that with its acceptance ushers in the latter rain and a finished work as described in the remainder of the chapter. The Laodicean message is the last call that Christ will ever make to His church. It is comparable to Christ's last plea to Israel when He wept over His beloved city.

Israel's Sins Incurable. Isa. 1:5,6; Jer. 30:12,13. No wonder Jeremiah shed so many tears over the situation that he is known as the "weeping prophet". Jesus made the last call to Israel and because of its rejection wept over the city and nation and then died of a broken heart. "The voice that speaks to the impenitent today is the voice of Him who in heart-anguish exclaimed as He beheld the city of His love: 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, etc. (Luke 13:34,35)...He was weeping, O stubborn heart for you! Even when Jesus' tears were shed upon the Mount, Jerusalem might yet have repented, and escaped her doom. For a little space the Gift of heaven still waited her acceptance. So, O heart, to you Christ is still speaking in accents of love: 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock, etc... 'Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.'"--M.B. 217. The Laodicean message is the antitype in modern Israel of Christ's last call to ancient Israel. The call was rejected, their sin became incurable, their probation closed.

Weeping Prophets Needed. "There are no words hot enough or strong enough to expose the Laodicean folly, imagining she is rich and increased with goods and has need of nothing, when in God's sight she is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, lukewarm, and only fit to be spewed out of His mouth as an object of loathing...We need a weeping prophet today.... We need leaders and people who are capable of grasping the situation as it is in reality in God's sight, unaffected by the chloroform of unscriptural teaching and precepts of men, with which the church is kept in her blissful dream of self-satisfaction....The many tears of such a man...are like the tears of Jesus over His beloved city, Jerusalem."-English Writer.

The Remedy. The Great Physician offered to ancient Israel a complete remedy. Isa. 1:16-19. There was no excuse for sin-sick Israel and Christ was astonished that she did not apply the remedy. Jer. 8:21,22. Even Babylon might have been healed and averted her doom had the offered remedy been accepted. See Jer. 51:9. A complete remedy is offered to Laodicea. The same Physician who so accurately and honestly diagnoses her case also provides a healing remedy that will completely restore her to spiritual health and the favor of God. Rev. 3:18-20. An acceptance of this counsel means life; to reject it will bring death. It is a life and death message and can be lightly esteemed only at the peril of the soul. There is but one Physician who can heal the Laodicean disease and He alone has a healing medicine. He says: "Buy of Me". It would be impossible for such a poverty-stricken soul to purchase this remedy if it were not sold "without money and without price." See Isa. 55:1. There is no excuse.

Spiritual Wealth. "Gold refined by fire."-R.V. Gold is the symbol of wealth. It will buy anything in this world and will supply every earthly need. Gold is an appropriate symbol of spiritual wealth. Laodicea is poverty stricken. What constitutes the spiritual wealth of the church? (1) The Word. See Ps. 12:6; 18:30, Margin; Ps. 119:127. (2) Faith. James 2:5. None are richer than the children of faith in the word of God. "I know thy poverty, but thou art rich" was Christ's message to the suffering Smyrnans. (3) Love. In Gal. 5:6 we are told that faith works by love, and in Rom. 13:8,10 that love is the "fulfilling of the law." The Laodiceans are lukewarm because they have lost their first love. "The gold is faith and love"-Vol. 5:233.

Cause of Poverty. The Laodicean church has settled down content with what light and truth she has and has ceased to advance in the ever advancing light of the path of the just. Prov. 4:18. "The rebuke of the Lord will rest upon those who would bar the way, that clearer light should not come to the people." "We must not for a moment think that there is no more light, no more truth, to be given us. We are in danger of becoming careless, by our indifference losing the sanctifying power of truth, and composing ourselves with the thought, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.' While we must hold fast to the truths we have already received, we must not look with suspicion upon any new light that God may send."--G.W. 304,310.

Light Inexhaustible. "There are glorious truths to come before the people of God. Privileges and duties which they do not even suspect to be in the Bible will be laid open before them.. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of."-Vol. 8:322. "In every age there is a new development of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation. The old truths are all essential; new truth is not independent of the old, but an unfolding of it."--C.O.L. 127. "Different periods in the history of the church have each been marked by the development of some special truth, adapted to the necessities of God's people at that time. Every new truth has made its way against hatred and opposition; and those who were blessed with its light were tempted and tried."--G.C. 609.

A Warning. "It is not safe for us as reformers to repeat the history of the Reformers in every particular; for after those to whom God gave light advanced to a certain knowledge, many of them ceased to be reformers. We must not think for a moment that there is no more light and truth to be given us----We are not to fold our hands in complacency, and say, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.' It is a fact that we have the truth and we must hold with tenacity to the positions that cannot be shaken; but we must not look with suspicion upon any new light which God may send, and say, Really, we cannot see that we need any more light than the old truth which we have hitherto received, and in which we are settled. While we hold this position, the testimony of the True Witness applied to our case its rebuke."--R. H. August 7, 1894. See also T. M. 63-67, "Danger of Rejecting Truth" and 89-98, "Rejecting the Light".

Loss of Faith. Jesus asked the question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8. Many other prophecies indicate that the gold of faith would be very scarce in the last days. See 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:1-4. Faith! we scarcely know what it is."--T. M. 187. "Faith in the soon coming of Christ is waning....Faith has been decreasing to a fearful degree, and it is only by exercise that it can increase."--Vol. 3, p. 255,256. This lost faith must be regained by all who are saved out of the last generation. While many are casting away their confidence, God will have a people who will patiently "live by faith", for they have the "faith of Jesus". See Heb. 10:35-39; Rev. 14:12.

The Gold of Love. "Faith and love, -- how destitute are the churches of these."-T. M. 149. "Faith and love are golden treasures, elements that are greatly wanting among God's people."-Vol. 3 p. 255. "No matter how high his profession, he whose heart is not imbued with love for God and for his fellowmen, is not a disciple of Christ....In his zeal he might even meet a martyr's death, yet if destitute of the gold of love, he would be regarded by God as a deluded enthusiast or an ambitious hypocrite."-Vol. 5 p. 168 "The primal source of all defective saintship, and of all that the Divine Judge censures in any of His professed people, is the wane of love. Let a man be alive in love to God, and make it his joy to give his whole heart to Jesus, and his title is clear, and his acceptance sure."-"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 223.

The White Raiment. "White robes, that you may be clothed and your shameful nakedness be hidden."-20th C.N.T. "So as to hide your shameful nakedness."-Weymouth. The spiritual nakedness of the Laodicean church is shameful and ought to put her to shame. Instead of being ashamed she struts about as if on dress parade. A vision of her true state would bring the acknowledgement of Isa. 64:6. Dressed in filthy rags the church boasts of a royal robe. The white robe offered Laodicea is the "beautiful garments" of Christ's righteousness. See Isa. 52:1; 61:10. It is the preparation of the bride to meet the Bridegroom. Rev. 19:6,7

A Gift. The wedding garment is a gift from the Bridegroom. "To her was granted", indicated that the righteousness of Christ is obtained by the bride or church by an act of faith. In the parable of Matt. 22, it is also clear that the garment is provided by the Host or Bridegroom so that there is no excuse for anyone being without it. Yet Laodicea is without it and knows it not. "What is it that constitutes the wretchedness, the nakedness, of those who feel rich and increased with goods? It is the want of the righteousness of Christ. In their own righteousness they are represented as clothed with filthy rags, and yet in this condition they flatter themselves that they are clothed with Christ's righteousness. Could deception be greater?"--C.O.R. 109.

Beautiful Illustration. Zech. 3:1-5. "Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress....Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer....They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair....But the anguish and humiliation of God's people is unmistakable evidence that they are regaining the strength and nobility of character lost in consequence of sin....As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, 'Take away the filthy garments from them,' and the encouraging words are spoken, 'Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with a change of raiment.' The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world."--Vol. 5: p. 472-475.

The Eye Salve. The Laodicean church has lost her spiritual vision and unless it is regained she will perish. See Prov. 29:18. Like ancient Israel Laodicea is living under the blazing light of prophetic vision but is at the same time spiritually blind. "The gold is faith and love, the white raiment is the righteousness of Christ, the eye-salve is that spiritual discernment which will enable you to see the wiles of the devil and shun them, to detect sin and abhor it, to see truth and obey it."--Vol. 5 p. 233. A church with the gift of prophecy, with great light and truth, and with a glorious history, which is at the same time spiritually blind to its own condition and needs, is in a sad condition and is to be pitied.

Spiritual Anointing. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit that opens blind eyes and guides into all truth. See John 16: 8,13; 1 John 2:20,27. The secret of Christ's success. See Acts 10:38 * "We can attain to an understanding of God's word only through the illumination of that Spirit by which the word was given."--S. C. 109. Pocket Edition. John 9:6,7,39-41 is a good illustration of the applying of the eye salve to Laodicea and the result.

Memory Text: Rev. 3:18.

STANDING AT THE DOOR

20

Outside the Door. Rev. 3:20. The secret of Laodicea's lukewarm and wretched condition is that Christ is kept outside the door. He does not dwell within and from without He can do but little for her. "No doubt the name of Christ is artistically inscribed on Laodicea's door-plate; no doubt this piece of art is kept highly burnished. But He himself is kept outside the door. His indwelling is displaced by selfish, worldly, temporal, material plethora (excess, overabundance)."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 92. The Great Physician with His healing remedy is denied entrance so that He can not minister to the needs of a most wretched church.

The Individual Heart. Jesus enters the church by way of the individual heart. His appeal is to the individual and at his heart the Saviour stands, knocks and calls. "If any man hear My voice and open the door." "Christ will linger and knock and plead for communion with a single individual in a great church which as such has not room or accommodation for Him. 'I will come in to him.' Within the heart chamber is Christ's only satisfying place of relationship with any soul or company of souls."--Id. p. 93. "The Lord knocks at the door of your heart, desiring to enter, that He may impart spiritual riches to your soul."--C.O.R. 137. "He that hath an ear, let him hear," is the admonition to the individual member.

Christ Excluded. "The church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst....What a terrible thing it is to exclude Christ from His own temple. What a loss to the church. Our Redeemer sends His messengers to bear a testimony to His people, He says, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.' But many refuse to receive Him, because they fear that He will be an expensive guest. The Holy Spirit waits to soften and subdue hearts, but they are not willing to open the door and let the Saviour in....And so Jesus of Nazareth passes by. He longs to bestow on them His rich blessings and gifts of grace, but they refuse to accept them."-Brown Leaflet, "Education", No.6, 1898.

Desires Reconciliation. "I will sup with him and he with Me" indicates communion. Supping together is a sign of friendship, brotherly love and complete reconciliation. Jesus offers to become both the guest and the host. Communion will be restored. "Return unto Me and I will return unto you" is Christ's message to Laodicea. But she says, "Wherein shall we return?" See Mal. 3:7. In Joel 2:12-14 we are told that the Lord will "return" to those who accept the alarm message and will "leave a blessing". The awakening Laodicean message is also pictured in Isa. 52:1-10. "When Jehovah returneth to Zion"-R.V. "When the Lord shall convert Zion"-Douay. "They shall see the Eternal face to face as He returns to Zion."-Moffatt. Acceptance of the Laodicean message brings Jesus into the heart and renews His presence with His people. It makes complete the reconciliation so that His church is no longer nauseating to Him. The communion between Him and His people is reestablished.

Door Closed. Jesus is kept out by the closed door. He is too courteous to force His way in. He waits for an invitation. "Christ never forces His company upon any one. He interests Himself in those who need Him Gladly will He enter the humblest, home and cheer the lowliest heart. But if men are too indifferent to think of the heavenly Guest, or ask Him to abide with them He passes on."-D. A. 800. Jesus doesn't remain on the outside because there is no latchstring on the outside of the door. He never goes where He isn't wanted. A door is the means of entrance or a barrier against entrance. Every sin that separates between us and Christ is a barrier that must be removed. There is really a series of doors that finally reach the innermost recesses of the heart, the holy of holies. There Christ desires to dwell. It isn't enough to let him through the doors leading into the outer chambers of the heart temple.

Other Barriers. "Many have so much rubbish piled up at the door of their hearts that they cannot get the door open....All this rubbish must be taken away, and then they can open the door and welcome the Saviour in."-Vol 1:143. How can this rubbish be removed? "Let the Spirit of God, like a holy flame, burn away the rubbish that is piled up at the door of the heart, and let Jesus in; then His love will flow out to others through us."-Vol. 5:490. The entrance of the Saviour brings back the first love of the Philadelphian state. Fervid love will take the place of sickening, nauseating lukewarmness.

Jesus Also Calls. "If any man hear My voice" - indicates that Jesus not only knocks but calls. This was the custom of the time as no door was opened till the inmate recognized the voice of the person seeking entrance. See Acts 12:13,14. What is the message of Christ's voice as He knocks? It is the Laodicean message. This is the message that will open closed hearts to the entrance of Jesus. "Jesus is going from door to door, standing in front of every soul-temple, proclaiming, 'I stand at the door, and knock'. As a heavenly Merchantman, He opens His treasures and cries, 'Buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, etc....The gold that He offers is without alloy, more precious than that of Ophir; for it is faith and love. The white raiment he invites the soul to wear is His own robe of righteousness; and the oil for anointing is the oil of His grace, which will give spiritual eye-sight to the soul in blindness and darkness, that he may distinguish between the workings of the Spirit of God and the spirit of the enemy. Open your doors, says the great Merchantman, the possessor of spiritual riches, and transact your business with Me. It is I, your Redeemer, who counsels you to buy of Me."--C.O.R. 136,137.

✓ Secret of Victory. Jesus declared that He was helpless and could do nothing of Himself and that the secret of His success was His union with the Father. He said that He dwelt in the Father and the Father in Him. See John 5:19, 20,30: 8:28,29; 14:10,11. Jesus also made it plain that we are just as helpless without Him as He was without the Father. See John 15:4,5; 17:21-23. God manifest in the flesh through the indwelling Christ is the "mystery of godliness" and "the hope of glory". 1 Tim. 3:16; Col.1:26-29. This alone can produce perfection.

Impregnable Fortress. "When the soul surrenders itself to Christ a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ, becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies, is impregnable to the assaults of Satan."--D.A. 323,324.

Imparted Righteousness. "The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed. The righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven; the second is our fitness for heaven."-C.O.R. 118. Both imputed and imparted righteousness are obtained by faith when we accept Christ into the heart. "Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God....The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ, We receive righteousness by receiving Him."-M.B. 34. "It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour....This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us....When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness." --C.O.L. 310-312.

Rejection Brings Shaking. "I will spue thee out" indicates a final rejection of those who refuse His counsel. In Heb.12:25-28 it is called a shaking. In Eze. 20:33-38 the Lord says: "I will purge out from among you the rebels". The rejection of the Laodicean message brings the shaking and all rejectors will eventually be shaken or purged out of the church. "I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth, Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people."--E.W.270. Then the shaking hasn't yet taken place. A natural drift worldward is not a shaking or purging out of the rebels.

Cleanses Church. "But the days of purification of the church are hastening on apace. God will have a people pure and true. In the mighty sifting soon to take place, we shall be better able to measure the strength of Israel....The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul....In this time, the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy, will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness. When trees without fruit are cut down as cumberers of the ground, when multitudes of false brethren are distinguished from the true,...then will the church of Christ appear 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.'"--Vol. 5:80-82.

"Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust, as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe, and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God."--Vol. 8:41.

Acceptance Brings Latter Rain. "Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation." -Vol. 1:187. "Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects of our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost."-Vol. 5:214. "The testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it, and be purified."--E.W. 270. Then follows a picture of the latter rain. "I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, 'It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presenve of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel."-Id. p. 271.

The ~~Reward~~ Gift. v. 21. To the worst of the seven churches Christ makes the most glorious promise. Christ is now at the right hand of the Father on His throne. Heb. 8:1. He is to occupy this position "till" the kingdom of this earth is restored. See Ps. 110:1. Jesus takes the throne of David which was the throne of Adam and the throne of this world, at His second advent. Matt. 25:31; Isa. 9:6,7. This is the throne which the victors over the Laodicean condition, or the 144,000, will share with Christ. See Rev. 14:1. To every Laodicean who opens the door of the heart and permits Jesus to occupy the throne and rule the life, He offers a place "in" His throne to help Him rule the kingdom that will never end.

The Final Appeal. v. 22. The Holy Spirit joins in the plea.

"In the silent midnight watches,
List! thy bosom door!
How it knocketh-knocketh-knocketh-
Knocketh evermore!
Say not 'tis thy pulse is beating;
'Tis thy heart of sin;
'Tis thy Saviour knocks and crieth,
Rise and let Him in.
Death comes on with reckless footsteps
To the hall and hut;
Think you death will tarry knocking
Where the door is shut?
Jesus waiteth-waiteth-waiteth-
But the door is fast;
Grieved, away the Saviour goeth
Death breaks in at last.
Then 'tis time to stand entreating
Christ to let thee in,
At the gate of heaven beating,
Waiting for thy sin.
Nay-alas! thou guilty creature;
Hast thou then forgot?
Jesus waited long to know thee,
Now He knows thee not."

Memory Text: Rev. 3:20.

The Second Vision. Rev. 4:1-3. Here is introduced a new vision which constitutes the second grand division of the great prophetic drama of the Apocalypse. The curtain is lifted on a new scene constituting another series of religious events reaching from the first to the second advents of Christ. This vision embraces chapters 4,5,6,7. The first part of it like the former vision pictures a scene in heaven. All the visions of the Apocalypse are two-fold, revealing what is taking place in the heavenly sanctuary while the predicted earthly events are transpiring. In this new act, new characters or actors are seen in a new role. "After this" refers to the previous vision and not to the order of the events. "After this I looked."

The Open Door. This door was not the opening of the heavens as seen by Stephen at his martyrdom, or through which the dove-like Spirit descended on Christ at His baptism, or through which Jesus will descend at His second advent. See Acts 7:56; Matt. 3:16; Rev. 6:14. In this vision it was not a door "into" heaven but a door "in" heaven that was standing open. John did not see the door opened; it was already open. "An open door in the heavens"-20th C.N.T. "A door set open in the heavens"-Eng. R.V. "I looked and saw a door in heaven standing open."-Weymouth. John did not witness the scenes of this vision from the earth as he had the previous one but was taken in vision to heaven. He was taken through the open door and saw what transpired within the heavenly temple. "Ascendchither" (E.D.) was the command. In person he remained on Patmos but the journey and scenes were so real that like Paul he could not tell whether he was in the body or out of the body. 2 Cor. 12:1-4.

What Door? It is doubtless the door mentioned in Rev. 3:8 which was opened by Christ and He alone can close it. It is the door into the heavenly sanctuary and its services. The door to Christ's priestly ministrations in behalf of man which was opened by Him on the day of Pentecost as the result of His Calvary victory and will be closed by Him when His work as Mediator is over and probation closes. The scene within the open door includes the ministration of Christ and His assistants in both apartments, the holy and most holy, or both phases of His meditorial work in the heavenly temple. This is evident from the scenes described and also from the fact that the earthly events described cover the entire range of both phases of Christ's priestly work as in the former vision. See also Rev. 11:19.

Future Events. The "first voice" has the meaning of "former voice", that is, the voice of Jesus who gave him the former vision. "The voice that I had previously heard, which resembled the blast of a trumpet, again spoke to me and said."-Weymouth. See Rev. 1:10,11. The purpose of this vision like the former is to reveal future events. "I will show you things which are to happen in the future."-Weymouth. The first requisite of a correct understanding of human history is a view of the Creator and Governor of all things; to know that God rules in the kingdoms of men; that His throne is the center of the universe and all events are by His order or permission.

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The Throne. v. 2,3. "Set" here doubtless has the meaning of "situated", "located" or "established". While on earth thrones are tottering, dynasties are falling, and human governments are drifting toward anarchy and chaos, in heaven the throne of the Eternal is stable and secure. At the right hand of this throne Jesus took His place on the day of Pentecost and began His priestly ministration. See Mark 16:19; Heb. 8:1,2; Rev. 3:21. When Christ's work is finished in the most holy place and probation closes He is still at the right hand of Jehovah. Rev. 11:14-19 proves conclusively that the scene of this vision embraces Christ's work in both apartments. Instead of placing the chief emphasis upon the two apartments in the heavenly sanctuary it should be placed rather on the two phases of Christ's ministration before the throne. We are told that at the end of the 2300 days, "Christ had only completed one part of His work as our intercessor, to enter upon another portion of the work."--G.C.429.

The Eternal. No attempt is made by the Revelator to describe the person of Jehovah but only the effulgent glory that surrounds Him and His throne. While the Scriptures refer to the Dan 7:9,13 ? Father as a person, no description of His person is given. Jesus however is described and is said to be "the express image of His person." The jasper was the first and the sardius the last of the twelve stones on the breastplate of the high priest which represented the twelve tribes. See Ex. 28:17-21. These stones were placed in four rows. This probably symbolizes the fact that He is still the "God of Israel" or the overcomer. He is the "first and the last", the "Alpha and the Omega."

The Glory of God. In Rev. 21:11 Jasper is used to symbolize the light and glory of God. Jasper and Sardius are said to be the same as the ruby and sapphire used in Lam. 4:7 to represent the ruddy beauty of perfect health, Jasper is noted for its purity and brilliancy and is thought by some to be the modern diamond. It is called "a stone most precious" with crystalline clearness and a purple hue. The Sardius is also exceedingly precious and beautiful and of a bright, red, carnation color. United with these tints there came from the throne the white light of lightning flashes and the smokeless light of the seven blazing lamps. See v. 5.

The Encircling Bow. v. 3. "And a rainbow encircled the throne, in appearance like to an emerald."-Eng. R.V. "Encircling the throne was a rainbow, in appearance like an emerald."-Weymouth. The bow was doubtless in the form of a halo formed by the various colored lights reflecting the glory of God. The bow may refer to the shape or form of the halo rather than the rainbow colors. The emerald is a light, soft green which may have been the predominating color of a seven-hued bow or halo.

Bow of Promise. The bow is the symbol of grace returning after wrath. It was hung in the heavens after the flood as an evidence of love and grace and a promise that there would never be another flood. See. Gen. 9:12-17. The bow in this vision indicates that the occupant of the throne is the covenant-keeping God who will keep all His promises. The encircling bow is unbroken by an horizon just as rainbows are when seen from an airship high above the earth. A complete circle has always been the symbol of eternity and divinity. It represents the complete fulfillment of all God's promises as covenanted. His word is dependable even in an age of "trucebreakers". "The rainbow of promise encircling the throne on high."--D.A. 419.

The Royal Color. The emerald stone in the breastplate of the high priest represented Judah of the royal line. The One encircled by the emerald bow is the King or Ruler of the universe. He rules in justice and mercy. While the flashing glory of the jasper and sardius may represent the justice of God, over and above is the soft beaming emerald of promise and hope, of mercy remembered in wrath, of salvation overspanning and encircling the appearance of consuming fire.

Symbol of Righteousness. As colors reflect and reveal character, so these glorious colors doubtless reveal the righteous character of God. "Whenever the law is presented before the people, let the teacher of truth point to the throne arched with the rainbow of promise, the righteousness of Christ. The glory of the law is Christ; He came to magnify the law, and to make it honorable. Make it appear distinct that mercy and truth have met together in Christ; and righteousness and peace have embraced each other....As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. It is not justice alone that is to be maintained, for this would eclipse the glory of the rainbow of promise above the throne; men could only see the penalty of the law. Were there no justice, no penalty, there would be no stability to the government of God. It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation full and complete"--"Special Testimonies to Ministers." No.1,pp.44,45.

The Encircling Thrones. v.4. "Circling the throne were twenty-four thrones."-F.D. "Surrounding the throne were also 24 other thrones." -Weymouth. "Thrones" and not "seats" is the proper rendering. The throne was doubtless in the center of the throne-room and the twenty-four other thrones formed a complete circle around it. The circle is the emblem of completeness, fulness, perfection, and eternity. These are doubtless the same "thrones" referred to in Dan. 7:9,10 which "were placed" (R.V.) about the central throne. Different translations call the occupants of the 24 thrones, "elders", "senators", and "counsellors", names applied to the members of the great Sanhedrin.

The 24 Elders. The heads or representatives of the twelve tribes were called elders. The term "elder" is used more than 100 times in the Old Testament and always as a representative of a family, city, tribe or nation. In the New Testament an elder is always an official in a representative capacity. They may also be called elders because they are the first to be admitted into heaven, the first-fruits of the redeemed. Being the first born of God's family they are called elders.

In 24 Courses. In the typical sanctuary service, the priests and Levites were divided into 24 courses, each under the direction of a prince or elder. These 24 elders or princes were representative of many more who served under them in their courses. See 1 Chron. 23,24,25; Luke 1:8,9. There were 24,0000 Levites in these 24 courses. This order was directed by the Lord and was all typical of the heavenly sanctuary and its services. In Heb. 9:9,23,24 the typical sanctuary and services is called "the figures of the true" and "the patterns of the things in the heavens." The 24 elders around the throne of God are doubtless princes of the 24 courses of the heavenly service. They are not standing and waiting in the attitude of servants but are seated as royal counsellors and princes.

Assistant Priests. Just as the high priest of the Mosaic typical service had many assistants so Jesus must have many helpers in the heavenly sanctuary service. Rev. 5:8 shows that the 24 elders help offer befor Jehovah the incense or prayers of the saints.This is a priestly work and shows that they are assistants of Christ, the great High Priest. They have the white raiment of priests and priestly crowns of gold. The high priest wore a crown of gold on which was engraved "Holiness to the Lord." See Ex.39:30. The robes and crowns would also indicate the dignity of their positions and the purity of their lives.

Redeemed Beings. Christ was not qualified to become priest till He had been tempted in all points as a man. See Heb.2:17,18. Therefore only redeemed souls could act as His assistants. The white robes and crowns also indicate victory over sin. The above text tells us that Jesus was qualified as a priest not alone because He became man and was tempted in all points but because He was a complete victor over sin. See also Heb.4:14-16. "Victor's wreaths of gold upon their heads,"-Weymouth.Rev.5:8-10 also furnishes proof that the 24 elders were redeemed from the earth.

How Reach Heaven? According to the Scriptures there are but two ways in which man can reach heaven; through a resurrection or a translation. A translation is a passing from earth into the heavenly kingdom without experiencing death. Only two have ever entered heaven through the gateway of translation, Enoch and Elijah. See Heb.11:5.Moses was resurrected and taken to heaven soon after his burial and later came back with Elijah to talk with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. See Jude 9; Mark 9:2-4. The 24 elders were resurrected with Christ and ascended with Him as the first-fruits of His Calvary victory. See Matt.27:50-53; Eph.4:8. Margin.

Type and Antitype. "The Levitical priesthood was divided into twenty-four courses. Each course had its chief or governor of the sanctuary. This continued down to the time of Christ. When the Saviour ascended to heaven, He led a multitude of captives; and when John in vision was shown the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, with its seven lamps of fire burning before the throne of God, he saw four and twenty elders seated upon four and twenty seats....In this we see the antitype of the twenty-four courses of priests. The chiefs or elders, of each course have seats of honor, and they are kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek. The remainder of the multitude Christ took into heaven are not mentioned, but it is reasonable to suppose that they constitute the courses of which the four and twenty elders are the chiefs."--"The Cross and Its Shadow", Haskell, p.80

Justice Assured. One of the greatest safe-guards of justice is the jury system which gives a man the right to demand trial before his fellow peers. The 24 elders form a sort of jury of men who "have been tempted in all points" as we have. They are our brethren and know how to sympathetize. For this reason the final judgment of the wicked world and angels will be given to the redeemed of earth. See Dan.7:22; 1 Cor.6:2,3; Rev.20:4-6. The reason for the great variety of temptations is to qualify us to act as judges.

Memory test: Rev. 4:4

THE SEA OF GLASS

22

The Judgment Throne. Rev. 4:5. "Out from the throne came flashes of lightning, and voices and peals of thunder."-Wey. "Flashes of lightning and loud blasts and peals of thunder."-Moffatt. This clearly indicates that God is on the throne of judgment and that His mercy will be followed by wrath and judgments. See Ps. 77:16-19; Rev. 11:19; 16:18,19. In Dan. 7:9,10 the same scene is presented. "His throne was fiery flames and the wheels thereof burning fire."-R.V. "His throne was a blaze of flames and its wheels were burning fire."-Moffatt. Daniel calls it the judgment. This is further proof that the Revelation vision includes Christ's ministry in both the holy and most holy places. What a scene of supernal glory and dazzling splendor! In comparison how trifling and insignificant the pompt and pride of earthly monarchs, how pale the flickering torch of human glory! See also Eze. 1:1-4,13; 8:2.

The Seven Lamps. "In front of the throne seven blazing lamps were burning."-Wey. These seven lamps are said to represent the seven Spirits of God or the Holy Spirit in the fulness and perfection of His operations and power. See Rev.1:4. These must not be confused with the seven-branched candlestick representing the churches. It is from the torches before the throne that the candlesticks are lighted, so that the church becomes the light of the world. This is also the fire that burns out the dross and cleanses the church from sin and uncleanness. From these torches the apostolic church received the holy fire of Pentecostal power. A rebaptism of this holy fire from the blazing lamps is the modern church's greatest need. Such a baptism is coming to ripen and garner the final gospel harvest. See Joel 2:28-32; Rev. 18:1-5.

The Crystal Sea. v. 6. Other texts and translations show that the sea before the throne had only the appearance of glass. "As it were a sea of glass."-R.V. "Seemed to be a sea of glass, resembling crystal."-20th C.N.T. and Weymouth. See Rev. 15:2; Ex. 24:10; Eze. 28:14; 1:22. "The likeness of the firmament... as the color of terrible crystal." Crystal is any substance that is clear and concrete like glass or ice. The crystal sea represents the pavement or mosaic tile-floor of the throne room. "The pavement of this royal court of glory and judgment is a fitting symbol of the absolute clarity and righteousness of the Almighty as King and Judge."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy.", Stevens. p. 111.

Indescribable Glory. The glory of this scene is too wonderful for mortal tongue to describe. Imagine the glory of the illumination caused by the ruby-red sardius and the brilliant jasper lights from the throne, and the emerald green light from the encircling bow, mingled with the white and red lights from the flashes of lightning and the seven torches, all reflected on the glittering pavement of the sapphire-like stones of fire. Beside this scene the "Tower of Jewels" but faintly glimmered in the searchlight. The aurora borealis, with its ribbon-like streams of many colors, radiating from the region of the north magnetic pole and extending to the zenith, forming into various shapes and flickering and dancing in the sky like fire-fairies of the night,--this pales into insignificance in comparison with the celestial glory of the throne and throne room of the King of Glory. Nebuchadnezzar in his royal splendor and Solomon in all his glory give but faint conceptions of the glory of Him "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see."-1 Tim. 6:16.

The Living Creatures. v. 6. "Living creatures"-R.V. "Living ones."--E.D. Wycliffe first translated this "beasts" and it is one of the most unfortunate translations in the Bible. Other translators followed Wycliffe till the Revisers made the correction. "Living Ones" is doubtless the best rendering as "creatures" may apply to plants and animals as well as man. Who are the four "living ones" on the four sides of the throne of God? Their position before the throne and their relation to it will help to identify them. "Within the space before the throne and round the throne are four Creatures,"-20th C.N.T. "And midway between the throne and the Elders, and surrounding the throne, were four living creatures."--Weymouth. They are closer to the throne than the elders and next to the Holy Spirit in their relation to it. They hold positions next to the members of the Godhead. They stand and minister in the very presence of God.

Symbols Employed. In Rev. 5:6 Jesus is symbolized as a Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes. No one would think of considering this a picture of His bodily appearance. It rather describes His character and redeeming mission. The Bible is its own interpreter and these same symbols are used elsewhere with a divine interpretation. See Eze. 1:1-14; 10:1-20. The living ones are here plainly called "cherubim". In Isa. 6:1-4 they are called "seraphim". The cherubim and seraphim are orders of angels or an order of angels that are the special messengers of the Godhead and minister before the throne. While there were only two "anointed covering cherubs" there were many cherubim as represented by the myriads of angelic figures woven into the curtains of the holy of holies of the sanctuary and temple. Lucifer was once one of the anointed covering cherubs and Gabriel now occupies that position. To Zecharias he said, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God."-Luke 1:19.

The Celestial Chariot. The four living ones symbolize the fiery angelic chariot of Jehovah, His personal messengers and attendants. See Ps. 68:17; 18:10. In Eze. 1:13-21; 10:5-15, the living creatures are spoken of as fiery wheels of the celestial chariot which go and return with the appearance and rapidity of a flash of lightning. In Dan. 7:9 God's throne is said to have "wheels as burning fire". Ezekial says that in this living chariot there is a wheel within a wheel, that is, one wheel is at bisection of the other so that the chariot can travel in any of the four directions. For this reason the four living ones of John's vision were at the four points of the compass around the throne of God. They are ready at a moments notice to do God's will and carry His messages to the worlds afar.

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Not Redeemed Beings. Rev. 5:9,10 is sometimes used to prove that the four living creatures are redeemed beings as are the 24 elders. This argument would be very good if the translation of the Authorized Version were correct. Some of the best Greek scholars declare that the original indicates that only the 24 elders sing the new song. The true explanation however is in the newer translations such as the R.V. which reads: "And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom of priests; and they reign upon the earth."

Eyes and Wings. v. 6,8. The many eyes "before and behind" and "within", indicate perfection of wisdom and vision. The cherubim messengers of the Lord go everywhere and see every thing. In Rev. 5:6 they are said to represent the eyes of Christ which "are sent forth into all the earth". The six wings represent rapidity of movement as do the four wings of the leopard beast of Dan. 7. The seraphims of Isa. 6:2 use two wings to cover their faces when in the presence of God, two wings to cover their feet, and two wings for flight. It is a picture of reverance, humility and obedience. "The matchless splendor of the earthly tabernacle reflected to human vision the glories of that heavenly temple...where seraphim, its shining guardians, veil their faces in adoration."--G.C. 414.

Further Symbolized. v. 7. These living ones are referred to 38 times in the Old and New Testaments. In Eze. 1 almost the same symbols are employed as in this verse. The man, ox, lion, and eagle represent the four most conspicuous orders of animal life. They are the kings of intelligence, of the field, of the forest, and of the air. God's cherubim messengers have the courage, boldness, and majesty of a lion; the patience, perseverance, and strength of an ox; the intelligence and reasoning power of a man; and the keen sight, far vision, swiftness, and untiring flight of an eagle. In Zech. 6:1-5 these same "four spirits of the heavens" are represented as four chariots, "which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth."

Jewish Author. "These four which have principality in this world; among intellectual creatures, man; among birds, the eagle; among cattle (domestic animals), the ox; and among wild beasts, the lion; each of these has a kingdom, and a certain magnificance; and they are placed under the throne of glory; Eze. 1:10, to show that no creature is to exalt itself in this world; and that the kingdom of God is above all."--Rabbi Abin, Shemoth Rabba, Sec. 23. fol. 122. 4. Jewish writers also tell us that the 12 tribes camped around the tabernacle in four divisions as follows; Judah, Issachar and Zebulon on the east with the lion as their standard; Ephraim, Manassah, and Benjamin on the west with the ox or calf as their standard; Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, on the south with the face of a man as their standard; Dan, Asher and Naphtali, on the north with a flying or spread eagle as their emblem. See Num. 2:1-15. Thus the 12 tribes in four groups covered or guarded and protected the tabernacle. Jesus being of the tribe of Judah is called "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah." ✗

Guards of Throne. "Israel marched through the wilderness under the four banners of the lion, young ox, the man, and the flying eagle. These were their ensigns, their guards, their coverings, the symbols of powers by which they were protected and guided.... To cover and guard, is thought to be the proper signification of the word cherub....A vision of the cherubim, then, is a vision of them that cover, protect, guard, and keep."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, pp. 256, 257. The living ones representing the cherubim host are the guards, keepers, protectors, and coverings of the throne of God. Two of them are the "anointed covering cherubs."

God's Secret Service. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit these cherubim ministering spirits constitute the eyes of the Lord that "run to and fro throughout the whole earth" and which see and record and report everything. "These symbolic forms... represent those seraphic beings of the immediate heavenly and divine court, which stand in worship before their Almighty Sovereign and in readiness for detective and executive service at His will. Their arrangement of worship is here emphasized, while their detective and executive engagements are especially revealed and emphasized in Ezekiel 1, and in other places in the Old Testament....These four beings represent indomitable patients, human understanding and appreciation, and lofty vision. Especially pronounced is their inescapable detective scrutiny. Their special correlation with human saints is confirmed by the fact that their figures were emblazoned upon the four standards of the four quarters of the camp of Israel."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, pp. 111, 112.

Leaders of Praise Service. v. 9-11. Under the leadership of the first of the anointed covering cherubs, the cherubim host lead the 24 elders and all heaven in the praise and worship of the Creator. Lucifer was once leader of the celestial choir and now doubtless Gabriel holds that position. "Four troops of ministering angels praise the holy blessed God."--Pirkey Eliezer, chap. 4. Overcome by the glory of the scene the 24 elders arise in reverance from their thrones and remove their crowns and cast them before the throne of God as they prostrate themselves in an attitude of adoration and submission. Queen Victoria once expressed a desire to be living on the earth when Christ returns. When she was asked why, she replied that she wanted the privilege of laying the crown of England at the feet of the Redeemer.

Oratorio of Creation. The 24 elders join the heavenly host in worshiping Jehovah because He is the Creator. This is the true motive of worship. Only a creator deserves worship by the creature. Creature worship is idolatry. There are no evolutionary modernists among these worshipers. While many on earth are giving the glory of creation to evolution, up in heaven around the throne of God the glory and honor of creation is ascribed to Jehovah, the Maker of all things. See Rom. 1:19-25, Weymouth.

Memory Text: Rev. 4:11.

THE SEVEN SEALS
23

The Sealed Book. Rev. 5:1. The vision of the previous chapter is here continued. The praise service ended, the prophet's attention is again called to the occupant of the throne and he is privileged to behold one of the sublimest scenes ever witnessed in prophetic vision. The right hand of Jehovah seemed to be extended through the veil of glory that enveloped Him and in it was a book or "scroll" (E.D.; Moffatt). It was a scroll of scrolls or seven scrolls in one, each firmly sealed. To conform to the description in the vision and the custom of the time the comma must be placed after "within" instead of "backside". The scroll was written within and the seals were without. "Written within, and sealed on the back"-Grotius. "Written within and on the outside firmly sealed with seven seals."-Emphatic Diaglott.

The Challenge. v. 2. This strong and mighty angel is doubtless Gabriel, the first of the covering cherubs. He steps forward and heralds a challenge to the universe. The call rings through all creation but it is greeted with profound silence. v. 3. No angel in heaven or man on earth or fallen angel was able or worthy "to open the scroll or look within it."-E.D. "To open the book or look into it."-Weymouth. "Neither angels, men or devils."-Dr. Adam Clarke. The cherubs, seraphs, elders, and the mighty angelic host cease their singing and silently wait for some one of their number to step forward and take the scroll from the hand of the Eternal and break its seven seals.

The Prophet Weeps. v. 4. Various translations read: "I wept much", "I wept long", "I wept bitterly", "So I began to weap bitterly", "I burst into tears and continued weaping." John knew that the sealed scroll contained revelations of great importance to him and to the churches. He breaks under the keen disappointment when no one comes forward to break the seals and reveal the contents of the scroll. His anxiety and tears of grief brought results. "The book of Revelation was not written without tears, neither without tears can it be understood."--Benson. Many tears have been shed in an effort to understand the word. Tears have always preceeded the unsealing and revealing of God's secrets. The floods of light which now shines from the sacred pages and especially from the Apocalypse have not come forth without many penitential tears and diligent searchings by men who loved God and His eternal truth.

Book of Future Events. John knew that the purpose of the entire book and especially of this vision was to reveal "things which must shortly come to pass", or "things which must be hereafter". Rev. 1:1; 4:1. "Show you things which are to happen in the future."-Wey. We have found that these prophecies were written especially for the last days and the remnant of the church. "The fifth chapter of Revelation needs to be closely studied. It is of great importance to those who shall act a part in the work of God for these last days."-Vol. 9:267. John wept because he knew that the purpose of the entire book would fail if no one could be found to break the seven seals.

The Rolled Scroll. "History is but the unrolled scroll of prophecy."-Garfield. Then prophecy is the rolled scroll of history. And no created being is able to penetrate the future without divine revelation. Until revealed the future is rolled up and sealed to all except members of the Godhead. The challenge was: Who is able to break the seals and unlock the future? Who is able to unroll the scroll of future events? The silence revealed the fact that "no one was able".-R.V. Samuel Gompers said. "The future lies in the lap of the gods, and into that lap not even the wisest men of earth have been able to look." Not even Gabriel, the angel of prophecy, who gave Daniel and John their wonderful prophetic visions, was able to answer the challenge. Angels must get their revelations from a higher source as they cannot see the future. "The tallest son of the morning cannot tell a day before they take place the events that occur."-Ridpath.

The Divine Source. The book or scroll being in the right hand of the Father indicates that He is the source of all revelation and truth. This is indicated also in Rev. 1:1. The revelations are sent to the prophet "by His angel". Through the angel Gabriel the Lord reveals His secrets to man. Amos 3:7. Since seven is the symbol of completeness and perfection the seven scrolls would indicate the completeness of the messages concealed. The seven seals would indicate that the contents of the scrolls were securely and completely hidden from man; that the future was unknown and unknowable without divine aid.

The Challenge Accepted. v. 5. "Do not weep. The Lion which belongs to the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed, and will open the book and break its seven seals."-Weymouth. "The Lion conquered...and can therefore open the book with its seven seals."-20th C.N.T. It was very appropriate that one of the redeemed elders should announce to the weeping prophet that One was found who was worthy and able to break the seals and reveal the contents of the book. The worthiness of Christ was due to His Calvary victory and His earthly descent from the royal line of Judah and the kingly line of David.

The Lion King. Jacob declared that Judah was "a lion's whelp" and that "the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Gen. 49:8-10. Another prophet said that when Nebuchadnezzar removed the crown from the kings of Judah that the throne and diadem "shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." Eze. 21:25-27. The lion was the emblem embroidered on the standard of the tribe of Judah. Christ "sprang out of Judah" and as the Son of David will take the throne and reign forever. The plan of redemption, made possible by Calvary, places Christ on the throne of this world as King of Kings. His victory gave Him authority to unlock the house of David. Isa. 22:22; Rev. 3:7. Therefore He alone can break the seals of the scroll of events that lead to the kingship of the Lamb. The kingdom of Israel under David was a figure of the restored kingdom under Shiloah. No wonder the prophet wept. The return of Christ as King and the gathering of the saints depended on the opening of the book and the revealing of its secrets. How happy John must have been because of the announcement of the elder.

Son of David. Prophecy declared that the Messiah would be of the root of Jesse and the seed of David. Isa. 11:1,10. As Jesus rode into Jerusalem the multitude in fulfillment of prophecy hailed Him as the Son of David. Matt. 21:9. In Rev. 22:16 Jesus declares Himself to be the "root and offspring of David." "He was in preexistant deity the dynastic progenitor of the house of Judah; and His being introduced just here as such implies that this "book" must relate to the fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy concerning Judah, and that it is in the capacity of the divine founder of the throne of Judah that He was found worthy and able to take the book, to loose the seven seals thereof, and to read its contents into execution."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy." Stevens, p. 117.

Vision of the Lamb. v. 6. Christ is here symbolized by a lamb that had been slain. His location is given as "in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts". This would place Him at the right hand of the Father or next to Him in position in the heavenly government. "Midway between the throne and the four living creatures."-Weymouth. "Within the space between the throne and the four creatures."-20th C.N.T. Jesus has been restored to His place at the very center of the divine government, sharing with the Father in its power, authority, and eternal purposes. Because of His Calvary victory He has been exalted to even higher heights of honor and glory. See Eph. 1:20,21; Phil. 2:8-11.

The Crucified One. As our Mediator and High Priest Jesus stands before the throne of God and ministers His blood. He bears the marks of His crucifixion and pleads those scars in His eloquent appeals in behalf of those for whom He died. "A Lamb standing as if killed,"-E,D, "Seemed to have been sacrificed."-20th C.N.T. "He looked as if He had been offered in sacrifice."-Weymouth, This picture indicates that the crucifixion has an important bearing on all future history and that its events can be understood properly only when studied in the light of Calvary. The cross of Christ is the most important event of all history; the meeting place of eternity, "The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary."--G.W. 315.

The Seven Horns. Seven is the symbol of fullness and perfection. Horns are symbolic of power and strength. See Deut. 33:17; Ps. 89:17,24; Zech. 1:18,19. In Dan. 8, Rome, both in its pagan and papal form is symbolized by a horn that "waxed exceeding great", and in other prophecies the greatest of earthly powers are represented by beasts with ten horns. Horns are also used to represent kingly authority and rulership. Christ has all power "in heaven and in earth". He is omnipotent in power and is also the supreme Ruler. He is the King of kings and Lord of Lords; "the Prince over the kings of the earth". He rules "in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will."

The Seven Eyes. Eyes are symbolic of wisdom, discernment, and foresight. As the seven horns indicated the fullness of imperial power so the seven eyes show the fullness of intellectual and spiritual vision. The Lamb of God is all-wise; He is omniscient in wisdom as well as omnipotent in power. Nothing escapes His vision. His eyes like lamps of fire light up the darkest places and He sees everything. His all power is executed with all scrutiny in all the earth. The all-seeing power of the Lamb of God is an important part of His mediatorial work as our Priest. See Heb. 4:13-16.

The Seven Spirits. In Isa. 11:1-3 we are told that when the Holy Spirit would rest upon Jesus He would be given (1) the Spirit of wisdom, (2) the spirit of understanding, (3) The spirit of counsel, (4) the spirit of might, (5) the spirit of knowledge, (6) the spirit of fear, and (7) the spirit of quick understanding or discernment. The seven eyes of Christ by which He sees all are symbolic of the Holy Spirit and the angelic host or ministering spirits. See Zech. 4:6,10; Rev. 4:5. In 2 Chron. 16:9 the eyes of the Lord are said to "run to and fro throughout the whole earth."

Into all the Earth. The angelic host under the direction of the Holy Spirit is God's detective system in this rebel world. See Zech. 1:10,11; 6,8. For this purpose and for warfare they stand mobolized for instant and effective action. Ps. 103:19,20; Matt. 26:53. All the spirits of God are also sent forth to minister to the spiritual needs of those who accept the gospel. Heb. 1:14. Who sends the Holy Spirit and the ministering spirits forth into all the earth? See John 14:26; 16:7,8,13. They are the representatives of Christ sent forth to make effectual the plan of redemption and the sacrifice of the Lamb.

Final World Message. On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was sent forth with His ministering spirits to do a mighty work through the apostolic church. Once more they are to be sent forth into all the world to make a final mighty appeal to all men. See Rev. 14:6-14; 18:1-5. It was the sacrifice of Christ that made possible the sending forth of the Holy Spirit. Without Calvary there could have been no Pentecost. It is the slain Lamb who sends the seven spirits into all the earth to make effectual the plan of redemption. The seven blazing lamps furnish the light and power for the gospel message that is to lighten the earth with its glory.

Ministry of Angels. "Strength, grace, and glory have been provided through Christ, to be brought by ministering angels to the heirs of salvation."--Vol. 2:453. "The angels of God are ever passing from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth. The miracles of Christ for the afflicted and suffering were wrought by the power of God through the ministration of the angels. And it is through Christ, by the ministration of His heavenly messengers, that every blessing comes from God to us."--D.A. 143. Thus it is through the Holy Spirit and the ministering spirits that Christ sees everything and lightens the earth with His glory.

Memory Text: Rev. 5:5.

ORATORIOS OF CALVARY

24

The New Song. Rev. 5:7-10. The glory of the throne as pictured in the previous chapter caused the cherubim and 24 elders to sing the oratorio of holiness and creation. Now the vision of the slain Lamb before the throne, taking the closed book and breaking its seals and unfolding the events that lead to His final triumph and kingship, brings forth three more oratorios of praise and gladness. The praise of the assembled host and of the universe is expressed in a three-fold doxology which begins with the cherubim and elders and is called the new song. "The four beasts and twenty-four elders lead off in the oratorio singing to the Lamb.the praise for what He has done and is about to do for a vast company other than themselves."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 121.

Song of the Lamb. "And it is patent, that the presence of the blood-bought saints surrounding and acclaiming the Lamb of the ages supplies a feature of this unique occasion which could not be spared. Redeeming blood is Christ's supreme credential as He stands the central figure of the celestial convention. The whole staging of the concourse on the divine side had been to the end of delivering that book into the only worthy and competent hands to be found. It is the pierced hands that are extended by Him, and it is only pierced hands, even of the eternal Son, which are counted worthy and able. It is to the song of redeeming love and blood that the harps of the beasts and elders are tuned. The orchestra of musicians expressly intimates by brimming incense-bowls, that the theme to be presented is one of answered prayers and blood-washed saints." --Id.pp.121,122.

The Incense Bowls. "Golden bowls full of incense."-R. V. Gold is symbolic of the spiritual riches of faith and love and truth. The incense comes out of the bowls and is said to be the prayers of the saints. "Represents the prayers of God's people." -Weymouth. The prayers that reach the throne of God ascend from hearts that are pure and are filled with faith, love and truth. Incense was always associated with prayer in the typical sanctuary service. The altar of incense was located in the holy place near the door into the holy of holies. The offering of incense night and morning was a call to prayer, to worship. See Luke 1:10. It is comforting to know that sincere prayers ascend to God as sweet incense. See Ps. 141:1,2. "The odor of the prayers of Israelites is equal to myrrh and frankincense: but on the Sabbath it is preferred to the scent of all kinds of perfume." --Synopsis Sohar, p. 44, N. 37.

The Golden Harps. The cherubim and 24 elders both praise and serve, and praise while they serve. Their service is not a monotonous round of formal ceremonies. Music and praise have always been an important part of true worship. Sincere prayers ascend amid a cloud of sweet incense and the strains of beautiful harp music which indicates that they are very delightful to the Lord. See Prov. 15:8. A knowledge of this ought to cause us to pray more fervently and unceasingly.

A Priestly Work. While only the 24 elders who are redeemed beings can enter fully into the service of assistant priests, the angels seem to assist the 24 elders in presenting the prayers of the saints before the throne accompanied by harp music. In Heb.1:14 the angels are called ministering spirits who minister for the heirs of salvation. They are the eyes of the Lord in the earth who keep the record of our lives and carry our prayers heavenward. Angels who "desire to look into" those things which we can learn by experience, gladly cooperate with the redeemed elders in the priestly work of the heavenly temple.

The Song of Calvary. v.9,10. Many Greek scholars believe that the "they" refers only to the elders. "This song is sung exclusively by the elders, who play on their harps to the accompaniment of their songs."-Charles D. Litt, Archdeacon of Westminister. The best explanation however is in the fact that the best manuscripts and almost all of the newer versions use "them" instead of "us". "Thou art worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for thou wast slain and dost buy for our God by thy blood men out of every tribe and language and people and nation, and makest of them a kingdom and a priesthood for our God, and they will be reigning on the earth."-Concordant. The R. V., Weymouth, Moffatt, Emphatic Diaglott, 20th C.N.T. and many others translate this text with the same meaning. The Cherubim could sing such a song. It is very evident that the 24 elders were not of every kindred, and tongue and people and nation. They were mostly if not entirely of one nation. It is the final message that is world wide and of the complete work of redemption they were singing.

Why Called New? It is a new song to all who are made new in Christ. Only those who are recreated can sing it. A recognition that salvation and righteousness are obtained only through faith in a crucified and risen Saviour puts a new song in our mouths and hearts. See Ps. 144:9,10; Isa.42:10. This song was never before heard in heaven till the 24 elders, the first-fruits of Christ's Calvary victory, sang it on the day of Pentecost as they began their ministry. They were the first to sing it on the sea of glass. It is also new in that it never grows old because of the height and depth of the message it carries. Repetition only makes it sweeter and more melodious. The more the redeemed behold of the glories of the eternal world and realize the cost of their redemption, the more the song of Calvary will mean to them. It will always be the new song.

The Song of Songs. Of all the great songs to commemorate events in the history of the world and of the universe, the song of the Lamb will be the most popular and interest in it will increase with the passing millenniums of time. The desire of the unfallen worlds to hear it sung by those who sing from experience will result in a tour of the universe by Christ and the 144,000. Rev. 14:1-4. This company of translated saints who pass through the last and greatest conflict can sing the song of victory as none other can sing it because of the experience they have passed through. It is a song of experience and can be sung with depth of meaning according to the experience of faith and victory through Christ and His blood

Kings and Priests. This is not a promise of the future but is said to be an accomplished fact. All children of God now engaged in a priestly service are called "the Priests of the Lord." Isa. 61:6. See also Rev. 1:6. In Ex. 19:6 God's people are called "a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation," and in 2 Peter 2:9, "a royal priesthood, an holy nation." "A kingdom of priests in the service of God."-20th C.N.T. Not only are all citizens of the heavenly kingdom now serving in a priestly capacity in reconciling men to God, but they will reign on the earth when the conflict is over. Although surrounded by the unspeakable glory of the celestial courts, the 24 elders are looking forward to the time when the redeemed shall inherit the earth. The earth is their home and they are fellow citizens with the earthly pilgrims in whose behalf they minister. There are no modernists or unitarians among heaven's worshipers.

The Angelic Oratorio. The second part of the doxology is sung by the innumerable angelic host. v. 11,12. The angel host are likewise on all sides of the throne in a circle. "Countless angels on every side of the throne."-Weymouth. "Myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands...in a circle of the throne."-F.D. The angels are still farther from the throne than the cherubim and 24 elders. The redeemed elders are nearer the throne than the angelic host. "The angels of glory find their joy in giving,--giving love and tireless watchcare...to bring the lost into a fellowship with Christ which is even closer than they themselves can know."--D.A. 21. The divine arrangement as given in this picture is in harmony with other Scriptures. In the center of the throne room is the throne of the Father, just as the ark of the covenant was in the center of the holy of holies. Next to Him is Christ the Lamb; then comes the seven blazing lamps symbolic of the Holy Spirit, and next to the members of the Godhead are the covering cherubs, surrounded by the redeemed assistant priests, and last the angelic host, the ministering spirits. See Also Dan. 7:9,10.

The Throne Room. The size and glory of the heavenly temple is beyond our comprehension. "The abiding place of the King of Kings, where thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before Him; that temple, filled with the glory of the eternal throne, where seraphim, its shining guardians, veil their faces in adoration, could find, in the most magnificant structure ever reared by human hands (Solomon's temple) but a faint reflection of its vastness and glory."--G.C. 414. Architects estimate that it would cost $87,000,000,000 to reproduce Solomon's temple in the 20th century. How grand and immense must be its antitype in the heavens.

The Angel Chorus. v. 12. The angelic choir sing with a loud "voice" not "voices". They sing in perfect unison without a discordant note proclaiming the worthiness of the Lamb, their beloved Commander. It is a perfect song of praise because it ascribes to Christ the seven species of praise. Power indicates omnipotence; Riches, benificence; Wisdom, omniscience; Strength, power in exercise; Honor, the highest reputation for what is done; Glory, praise due such actions; Blessing, the thankful acknowledgement of the whole creation.--(Dr. Adam Clarke). The Lamb is worthy to receive all praise because He has all power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing. Because He is all and in all to us He should receive all from us,--all our power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing. All should be devoted to Him and expended in His service and to His glory. "Those hosts of angels, surrounding in vast circles the throne of God, lift up their ascription of worth to the Lamb in seven-fold refrain....These noble beings have ever been most diligent students and enthusiastic abetters of the eternal divine purpose concerning the church of Jesus Christ." --"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy," Stevens, p. 126.

The Grand Chorus. v. 13. At laat the whole universe joins in the grand chorus of complete and eternal redemption through the sacrifice of the Lamb. It is the oratorio of all creation which has been effected by the curse of sin. The triple doxology began with the cherubim and elders before the throne, who were joined by the angelic host, and when redemption is complete bursts out beyond the circles of the celestial temple to all creation. "Finally, all creation affected by the fall and embraced in the provisions of redemptive restoration reverberates with loyal praises to God and His Lamb, offering up unto them in thankful voice from all those spheres all 'Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power.' We can well understand the thrill of rapturous anticipation that will at this time animate all the waiting creation when we read a passage like Rom. 8: 18-21."--Id. p. 126.

Paradise Restored. Before breaking the seven seals which would reveal the terrible events of the future that would bring more tears to the prophet, for his encouragement he is carried forward in vision to a sinless and happy universe, to Paradise restored. The entire universe is included in this chorus of redemption leaving no room for an ever burning hell where the wicked are suffering in endless torment. There are no screams and groans to break the harmony of the praise service. The rebellion is over and the former love and unity has been restored forever for "affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9. The praise is to both God and the Lamb. The love of the Father devised the plan of salvation and the love of Christ carried it into execution, and they both share equally in the praise and adoration of the universe. "The whole creation joins in one, to bless the sacred Name, of Him who sits upon the throne, and to adore the Lamb."

The Finale. v. 14. "Amen" means the end. It is also an expression of approval on what has been seen or heard. After the curtain falls on this matchless scene of restored unity and glory the cherubim host cry out, "So be it", and the 24 elders arise from their thrones and again cast their crowns before the throne and fall in an attitude of reverance and worship and adoration. No wonder the song of Calvary will never grow old and never, never die.

Memory Text: Rev. 5:12.

THE SYMBOLIC HORSEMEN

25

First Seal Broken. Rev. 6:1,2. The vision of chapters 4 and 5 was preliminary to the breaking of the seven seals. Its purpose was to picture what was taking place in the heavenly temple while the events of the seven seals are transpiring on earth. The vision of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse is one of gripping interest. The scenes and language are so highly dramatic that the word-picture has been dramatized and thrown on the screen. The seven sealed scroll contained a record of future events. 4:1. With what interest the 24 elders, Cherubim, angelic host, and especially John, must have awaited the breaking of the seven seals. He had wept much while waiting for some one to be found who was worthy and able to open the book.

The Seven Seals. The seals picture in symbols a series of religious events or conditions between the first and second advents giving the changing conditions of the church. The seven seals cover the same period as the seven letters but add much valuable information. The letters make an appeal to the ear while the seals with their symbols appeal to the eye. These are the two best methods of imparting instruction. The four symbolic horses and horsemen represent the professed Christian church from Pentecost to the Reformation. The color of the horses symbolize the spiritual condition of the church and the rider its responsible leadership.

Call of Cherub. There were seven scrolls in one and each was sealed so that the breaking of one seal released only the events of that seal. As the Lamb broke the seal one of the living creatures with a voice like thunder cried "COME". The "and see" does not belong in the text and is left out of almost all manuscripts and versions. The command is to the contents of the scroll to come forth in symbols before the prophet. "And I heard one of the four living creatures say, as if in a voice of thunder, 'Come!'".-Weymouth. That the cherubim under the direction of Gabriel, the first of the anointed covering cherubs, should present these events in symbols before the prophet is in keeping with God's plan of prophetic revelation. See Rev.1:1. In giving the Apocalypse Christ "sent and signified by His angel unto His servant John".

The White Horse. As the seal was broken and the events of the scroll were unsealed or released they were acted out before the prophet. At the authorative command of the living creature, the symbolic horses and horsemen seemed to gallop forth out of the unsealed scrolls. "And he came forth, conquering and to conquer."-R.V. "And he came out conquering, and that he might conquer."-Emphatic Diaglott. Among the Romans the white horse was the symbol of victory. On the day of a Roman triumph the honored general and his staff rode upon white horses or in a chariot drawn by white horses. The fleetest and most effective part of the armies of that age were the mounted archers or bowmen. The symbol of the first seal is an appropriate picture of Christianity during its conquests in the days of the apostles under the early rain. White represents the purity of the church and the horse the swiftness with which it went forth to conquer.

Bow and Crown. "And I looked and a white horse appeared, and its rider carried a bow; and a victor's wreath was given to him; and he went out conquering and in order to conquer."-Weymouth. The bow like the two edged sword is symbolic of the word of God by which the arrows of conviction are sent home to the guilty heart. The rider representing the responsible leadership of the church may represent the Holy Spirit who makes the word effectual and sends the arrows of conviction to prick the heart. Christ through His representative the Holy Spirit controlled the apostolic church. In prophecy Christ is pictured as a mounted archer whose messages pierce the hearts of His enemies like arrows. See Ps. 45:2-7. "Success to you as you ride forth....Sharp are your arrows; nations shall fall before you, and the king's foes lose heart."-Moffatt. In Hab. 3:8,9, Christ is described as riding forth with "thy bow...even thy word." The bow also is symbolic of death to the rejectors of the gospel. See Ps. 7:11-13. The crown of the rider is also symbolic of victory. A victorious rider is seen guiding a victorious church.

The Last Charge. Rev. 6:1,2, pictures the first charge of the church against the forces of evil and is symbolized by a single horse and horseman going forth conquering and to conquer. In Rev. 19:11-16 we are given a prophetic picture of the last triumphant charge of the forces of righteousness against the hosts of evil which is symbolized by a whole troop of white horses. These two pictures represent the first and last attacks of the church militant under the leadership of Christ. The church militant begins and ends in victory. In the first there is a single white horse and horseman and in the second many horses and horsemen. The rider of the first caries the bow of grace with which he sends to the heart the darts of love, while the leader of the white brigade carries a sharp two edged sword with which He smites the nations. In the first the rider is given a crown symbolic of victory while in the second He has many crowns symbolic of many victories.

A Pure Church. The color of the horse is symbolic of the pure condition of the apostolic church during the first three centuries during which time it virtually conquered the world. "Much of the history of the Christians in the first two centuries of the Christian era is very obscure. They spread far and wide throughout the world...,Everywhere they seemed to have carried much of the spirit of Jesus; and though everywhere they aroused bitter enmity and active counterpropaganda, the very charges made against them witness to the general goodness of their lives."--"The Outline of History", H.G. Wells, Vol. 1, p. 590.

"A sect so unobtrusive as well as innocent...presenting to surrounding paganism the first and purest of zeal beautified by character."--"History of the Romans", Merivale, Vol. 6, chap. 54.

Conquering and to Conquer. This would represent an increasing success and a spreading more and more over the earth. "The preachers of Christianity went forth from Judea for the moral conquest of the empire and the world. Much as we may admire the enthusiasm of the Jewish patriots...still more freely may we sympathetize with the inspiration of these soldiers of Christendom, who left fathers and mothers, home and country, and all the associations on which they had fed from infancy, for the glory of God and the love of a spiritual Redeemer."- Id. p. 460.

"Animated by an unparalleled missionary spirit, His (Christ's) followers traversed the length and breadth of the empire, preaching everywhere the 'glad tidings'....In less than three centuries the pagan empire had become Christian not only in name, but also largely in fact."--"General History", Myers, p. 282.

Phenomenal Success. At the end of the first century Pliny, while governor of Pontus and Bithynia, wrote the emperor Trajan lamenting the magnitude of the "evil of Christianity". He said the pagan temples were almost deserted; that the sacred victims scarcely found any purchasers and that the "superstition" had not only infected the cities but had spread through the country. In Gibbon's Rome, chapter 15 we learn that "the progress of Christianity was not confined to the Roman Empire", but "the new religion, within a century after the death of its Divine Author, had already visited every part of the globe." As to numbers the same historian declared that the Christian congregation of the city of Rome numbered 50,000, and that of Antioch 100,000 or one fifth of the population. The Christian population of the empire was estimated at 5,000,000 not counting those outside its limits.

The Second Seal. v. 3,4. The horse again represents the condition of the church and the rider its responsible leadership. The second horse is "fiery red". Wey. In the period represented by the red horse the church has drifted away from the purity of its earlier history. The church takes on false doctrines and is corrupted by worldly influences. She loses her first love and unity, and strife and contention destroys the former peace and harmony. History attests that the predictions of Paul were true and timely and were fulfilled during this period. See Acts 20:28-30; 2 Thes. 2:3-7. The color of the horse shows the relation of the church of this period to the red dragon, the scarlet beast, and the scarlet clothed woman, or "Babylon the Great". See Rev. 12:3; 17:1-5.

The Church Paganized. The red horse covers the period of the paganizing of the church, the transition from pagan to papal Rome. "During this indefinite time a considerable amount of a sort of theocrasia seems to have gone on between the Christian cult and the almost equally popular and widely diffesed Mithraic cult, and the cult of Serapis-Isis-Horus. From the former it would seem the Christians adopted Sun-day as their chief day of worship instead of the Jewish Sabbath, and the abundant use of candles in religious ceremonies.... The contribution of the Alexandrian cult to Christian thought and practices were even more considerable. In the personality of Horus...it was natural for the Christians to find an illuminating analogue to their struggles with the Pauline mysteries. From that to the identification of Mary with Isis."-- "The Outline of History", Wells, Vol. 1, pp. 590, 591.

Peace Destroyed. When the Prince of Peace departed He said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." This peace was promised on condition of obedience and loyalty. When the church departed from Christ and its leadership fell into the hands of unscrupulous religo-politicians the peace of the Prince of Peace departed. Strife and confusion entered and they even began "to kill one another". The church became drunken with the blood of saints. See Rev. 17:6. "The bottom questions which he (Constantine) had to confront were essentially religious, His great principle of action looked to the union of one body of the Christian and pagan populations of the empire....A persecution broke out, in which one body of Christians became the persecutors of the other. The bloody bitterness of paganism was paralleled by the intolerance born of fanaticism among the believers."--"History of the World", Ridpath, Vol. 3, p. 329. Gibbon in chapter 47 of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" declares that this bloody struggle lasted 250 years. They fought over the nature of Christ, the incarnation, the Trinity, and over positions in the church. Arianism split the church in the fourth century resulting in bloody wars.

The Great Sword. "Hugh sword"-Moffatt. "To cause men to kill one another"-Wey. What sword was given the church by which they killed one another? Was it the two-edged sword of the Spirit, or the sword of Caesar or the state? Let history answer: "This act of Constantine (using the Christian cross as his standard) constituted a turning point in the history of the Roman empire, and especially in that of the Christian church. Christianity had come into the world as a religion of peace and good will. The Master had commanded His disciples to put up the sword, and had forbidden its use by them either in the spread or in the defense of the new faith. For three centuries now His followers had obeyed literally this injunction of the Founder of the church, so that a Quaker, nonmilitary spirit had up to this time characterized the new sect....Not in a moment all this was changed. The most sacred emblem of the new faith was made a battle standard, and into the new religion was infused the military spirit of the imperial government that had made that emblem the ensign of the state. From the day of the battle of Melvian Bridge a martial spirit has animated the religion of the Prince of Peace. Since then Christian warriors have often made the cross their battle standard. This infusion into the church of the military spirit of Rome was one of the most important consequences of the espousal of the Christian cause by the Emperor Constantine." --"General History", Myers, pp. 300,301.

Given by State. The great sword given the rider of the red horse was the sword of the state which was delivered to the church in the days of Constantine when church and state were united. It was the church of the apostolic period that was given the sword of the Spirit and Pentecostal power with which to conquer. When the church because of its apostacies lost this great spiritual weapon she sought for and obtained the sword of Caesar with which to enforce her decrees and dogmas. The Dark Ages of papal persecution quickly followed.

188 3 822

Memory Text: Rev. 6:2.

THE CHURCH OF THE DARK AGES

26

The Third Seal. Rev. 6:5,6. As the Lion of the Tribe of Judah broke the third seal and unrolled the scroll the prophet saw the third apocalyptic horse and horseman ride forth to act their part in the dramatizing of future events. The third horse was black which is just the opposite of white and is incapable of reflecting light. Black is the symbol of evil, error, sorrow, defeat, and moral and spiritual darkness, fitly representing the semi-pagan religion of the middle ages. During this period God's two Witnesses had to do their teaching clothed in sackcloth. See Rev. 11:2,3. The smothering of the gospel light as the result of the great apostasy ushered in the midnight of the world.

The Historian's Picture. "The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christians was gradually corrupted; and the monarchy of heaven, already clouded by metaphysical subtleties, was degraded by the introduction of a popular mythology, which tended to restore the reign of polytheism." "The Christians of the seventh century had insensibly relapsed into a semblance of paganism; their public and private vows were addressed to the relics and images that disgraced the templed of the East; the throne of the Almighty was darkened by a cloud of martyrs, and saints, and angels, the objects of popular veneration." "In the beginning of the eighth century...the more timorous Greeks were awakened by an apprehension, that under the mask of Christianity, they had restored the religion of their fathers."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire," Vol. 4, chap. 49.

The Balances. The rider represents the leadership of the church. A pair of balances has always been the symbol of judgment, representing the authority to make decisions. All ancient religious recognized a god of scales who weighed the deeds of the dead to determine their reward. "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting" was the message of doom written by the unseen hand on the palace wall of Belshazzar. A hand holding a pair of balances is still the symbol of justice and judgment and is often engraved on the front of buildings devoted to the administering of justice.

Bishops Became Judges. This picture indicates that the leaders of the church would become the judges of civil as well as religious matters. The union of church and state placed the church in politics and the bishops became the virtual rulers. The church officials instead of the Scriptures became the sole and supreme judges of religious faith and practice. It was during this time that the chief bishop or supreme pontiff of the church "as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thes. 2:4. "Setting himself forth as God."-R.V. The bishop of Rome became the supreme judge and ruler of the world and from his decisions even kings had no appeal. The controversy between Henry IV of Germany and Pope Gregory VII which resulted in the humiliation and subjection of the king is a notable illustration of the judicial power and authority of the church leaders of this period.

24234

The Pope's Claim. "I claim to be the supreme judge and director of the consciences of men--of the peasant that tills the fields, and the prince that sits on the throne; of the household that sits in the shade of privacy, and the legislature that makes laws for kingdoms. I am the sole and last supreme judge of what is right and wrong."--Vide Quirinus, (Appendix 1, p. 832). Quoted from a sermon, "In the Pope's Name", by Cardinal Manning preached in Kensington, England, in 1869.

"The decision of the Pope amd the decision of God constitute one decision....Therefore no one can appeal from the Pope to God."--Augustinus de Ancona, "On an Appeal from a Decision of a Pope". From a Latin copy of the writings of Agustinus in British Museum. These are samples of several similar statements.

The Wheat and Barley. The wheat and barley are sold by measure and not by weight in this symbolic prophecy, therefore the balances have nothing to do with the wheat and barley. Thenote in the R.V. says that the language implies "great scarcity". A famine is indicated. A measure of wheat was a pint and a half and was the allowance for a man for one day's scanty subsistance. A penny was the ordinary wages of soldiers and workmen. See Matt. 20:2. In ordinary times a penny would buy 24 measures of barley but here only three, the amount allotted to a slave. The daily wages would barely buy the daily bread.

A Spiritual Famine. Amos 8:11,12. This Scripture was literally fulfilled during the middle ages when the Bible or bread of life was taken from the people. What little spiritual food the starving people received was measured out to them by the priests in small measures. Wheat in the Bible is used to symbolize the word of God and also "the children of the kingdom". Because the word was so sparingly sown during this period the true children of the kingdom were also few, for it is the seed that produces the harvest. How starved and hungry Luther was when he found a copy of the Scriptures chained in a monastery. His starving soul feasted without restriction on the heavenly spiritual manna and his cravings were satisfied.

A Cheaper Food. According to the Mishna barley was the food for horses and asses. However barley bread was eaten by the very poorest and also in time of famine. It was a much cheaper grade of food than wheat. Therefore during this time of spiritual darkness and famine a cheap grade of spiritual food would be more plentiful than the small amount of the word measured out to the people. This doubtless represents the writings of the fathers and the traditions of the church which had a little food value in them but scarcely enough to keep them alive. A great deal of modern preaching is almost devoid of spiritual food and yet many Christians are able to exist on it although they are spiritually weak and emaciated.

Religion Commercialized. Some believe that the symbols employed represent the commercial spirit that entered and dominated the church during this period. The temple of God and place of prayer became a place of merchandise where enormous profits were made from the sale of relics, the administering of the ordinances, prayers for the dead, burials, marriages, etc. The church became a great commercial institution and grew rich through her unholy traffic. The oil and the wine are symbolic of the Holy Spirit and the Gospel or Christian doctrines. Isa. 55:1. The voice from the throne is doubtless the voice of Christ warning the church against the great danger of injuring the agencies of salvation. The Two Witnesses had to do their teaching in secret or clothed in sackcloth. Rev. 11:1-3.

The Fourth Seal. v. 7,8. The Greek word from which "pale" is translated is used by the Greeks to describe the color of persons afflicted with plague,-a death palor. "Greenish-white" it is sometimes translated. "Sallow-greenish horse"-Concordant Version. It is the death-green leperous color mentioned in Lev. 13:49; 14:37. A greenish ghastly color of putrefying flesh. The riders name was "Death" and "hades came close behind him."-Wey. "The Lord of the place of Death rode behind him."-20th C.N.T. The Lord of the place of death is Satan. See Heb. 2:14. The leaders of the church had so far departed from the gospel that made them the ministers of life that they became the ministers of death under the control and leadership of Satan. Power was given the church by Satan to slay the fourth part of the earth with the sword, hunger, death, and the beasts of the earth. See Dan. 11:33; Rev. 13:7. This is a terrible but true picture of the fallen, backslidden, and persecuting church of the middle ages.

World Dominion. Barnes in his "General History", p. 321, declared that for centuries the papacy kept gaining strength until finally, "a new Rome rose from the ashes of the old, far mightier than the vanquished empire, for it claimed dominion over the spirits of men." Dr. John Lord declared the papacy to be a power "controlling kings, dictating laws to ancient monarchies, and binding the souls of millions with a more perfect despotism than Oriental emperors ever sought or Dreamed."-- "Beacon Lights of History," Vol. 3, p. 96. H.G. Wells in his "Outline of History", says that the papacy was an attempt at world dominion through religion, to do what Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, Charles V, and others attempted by civil and military power, but failed. This world power controlled every nation in the "fourth part of the earth", Europe, North Africa, and Western Asia. This is about one-fourth of the land area of the old world. The persecutions of this religio-political power are pictured in several Bible prophecies. See Dan. 7:21,25; 11:33; Matt. 24:21,22; Rev. 13:7; 12:6,14; 17:6.

The Fifth Seal. v. 9-11. We must not forget that the seven seals reveal religious events to transpire on earth and that symbols are used and figurative language employed. It is evident that the altar of the fifth seal is figurative as millions of martyrs could not be shut up under a literal altar. The language indicates clearly that the millions of martyrs who died for their faith at the hands of the apostate church of the dark ages are here pictured. "On account of the testimony which they held fast."-Eng. R.V. "It is not death, but the cause in which death is incurred, which constituted a martyr."-Old Maxim. X

Altar of Sacrifice. The sacrifices were slain in the court of the sanctuary at the altar of burnt offerings, and their blood poured out at the foot of the altar. See Lev. 4:7. Under the altar of burnt offerings in Solomon's temple was a deep excavation in the solid rock into which the blood of the thousands of victims ran or was poured. This is not Now in the middle of the Mosque of Omar and is covered with a marble slab. The Moslems call it "The well of spirits." Paul at his martyrdom was offered on the altar of sacrifice. See 2 Tim. 4:6. John saw the martyred saints "at the foot of the altar."-Wey. Christ was offered in sacrifice on the altar of Calvary. He was slain "without the gate" in the court in this earth and for three days remained in the tomb under the altar, His blood crying for vengeance.

Cry for Vengeance. "The altar is upon the earth, not in heaven... and they cry with a loud voice, that is, their blood, like that of Abel cries for vengeance."-Dr. Adam Clarke. See Gen.4:10. In like manner the blood of a hundred million martyrs cries for justice to the One who says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord." Rom. 12:19. The earth is the altar upon which the martyrs gave their lives in sacrifice, and under the altar in their graves, they are bidden to wait patiently till others were slain in the final persecution and the great Judge should avenge their blood. If they were literally in heaven their spirit would be contrary to that of Christ and all Christian martyrs at the time of their death. It is their blood that is crying to God.

White Robes. v. 11. White robes are symbolic of the righteousness of Christ which is imparted to all who accept it by faith. It was faith in Christ and His righteousness that enabled these martyrs to die for Him. They were actually given these robes before their death just as Paul's crown of righteousness was his on the day of his martyrdom. 2 Tim. 4:6-8. The fifth seal symbolizes the period of the Reformation when Europe was awakened to the real nature of the papal power. A cry for vengeance even from the living was the logical result of the change of attitude towards those who died as heretics but were later venerated as saints.

Cry for Justice. Milton, the blind poet, while prime minister to Cromwell, expressed in verse the cry for vengeance from both the blood of martyrs and the lips of the living who were at last free from the spiritual bondage that had enslaved the souls of millions during the Middle Ages:

"Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in Thy book record their groans
Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that rolled
Mothers with infants down the rocks, their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they to Heaven
Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway,
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learned Thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe."

Memory Text: Rev. 6:9.

SIXTH AND SEVENTH SEALS

27

Signs of the End. Rev. 6:12-17; 8:1. The sixth and seventh seals are inseparable and will be considered together. They picture the convulsions of nature which are to herald the second advent of Christ and the terrible effect that great event will have upon the wicked world. The key to the meaning of the seals is the sermon of Christ recorded in Matt. 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, in which He stated that signs in the sun, moon, stars, and on the earth would announce His return. Like the seals this great sermon covered the history of the church from the first to the second advent, picturing its apostacies, persecutions, and final triumph. Rev. Clemance in "Pulpit Commentary" says: "The ground-thought of this book is 'The Lord is coming'". To that great event every scene in the Apocalypse points and it is the climax of each vision and of the book itself.

No Symbols Employed. Literal language is used in describing the last two seals because they picture events that cannot be symbolized. The sixth scroll contained a prophecy of events that would harbinger the day of God's wrath and vengeance for which the blood of millions of martyrs had been calling. That this is literal and not symbolic prophecy is evident from the fact that the same events are foretold in several other literal prophecies of the Bible. All Scripture is to be taken literally unless the language used indicates clearly that symbols are being employed or the same objects or events are figuratively described and interpreted in other Scriptures.

Great Earthquake. v. 12. The time of the opening of the sixth seal is located. Christ announced that great earthquakes in "divers places" would herald His return. See Matt. 24:3-7; Luke 21:10,11,25-28. The first of these great modern earthquake disasters was the Lisbon earthquake which occured Nov. 1:1755, and until then was the greatest recorded by man. It shook all of Europe and Africa and was felt even in America. It doubtless shook the entire globe. Lisbon was almost completely destroyed by the quake and the tidal wave that followed with the loss of 90,000 lives. This was the beginning of a series of earth convulsions that constitute omens of the end.

In Divers Places. Matt. 24:7. A recent dispatch from Washington said: "Frequent earthquakes in North and South America and Europe during the last few months have puzzled government scientists....They have no particular reason to suggest for the frequency of the recent earth disturbances...Geologists recognize that the earth's surface is in a continual state of unrest." Earthquake statistics which have been made possible by the invention of the seismograph reveal an alarming increase during recent years. During the first half of the 19th century there were 3,240 recorded earthquakes or an average of 64 per year. During the next 18 years there were 5,000 or 277 each year. From 1868 to 1908 there were 130,000 or an average of 2,600 a year. The average since has been more than 4,000 a year.

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Dreadful Fear. Luke 21:10,25,26. One writer speaking of the Japanese earthquake of Sept. 1923, said: "The unfortunate Japanese were attacked by earthquake, fire, tidal waves, new volcanoes bursting out, torrential rains, typhoons, and, worst of all, by dreadful FEAR, affecting millions." Edgar W. Woolard in the "American Review of Reviews" of October, 1923, said: "Fearful indeed is the plight of man when the solid earth itself trembles beneath his feet, and his faith in terra firma is shattered....Our globe is trembling somewhere nearly all the time."

Great Earthquake. Within six recent years three of the greatest earthquakes of history took their terrible toll of life and property. In Dec. 1920 there was a quake that centered in central China which shook the globe. It was said to be "the most destructive in the history of the world." The loss of life was estimated from 200,000 to 1,000,000. The Japanese earthquake in Sept. 1923 left between 200,000 and 300,000 dead, and 2,500,000 homeless. In Nov. 1926 there was an earthquake in Armenia of the 9th magnitude in the scale of 10. Entire towns and villages were swallowed up. These great earth disturbances will increase till they reach their climax in the final terrible convulsions of this sin-laden globe when Jesus returns. See Rev. 16:17-20; Jer. 4:23-28. Every earthly structure will go down in the crash except Christian character-buildings which are built on the solid rock of the eternal word.

The Sun and Moon. v. 12. This event took place May 19, 1780 and is known in history as "The Dark Day". History records the fact that the moon had fulled the day before which is in accord with the prediction. "The whole moon"-R.V. "The entire moon."-E.D. "The whole disc of the moon."-Wey. "The full moon turned like blood."-Moffatt. "And the moon, which was at its full."-20th C.N.T. While this event was not world-wide and took place in the New England states it meets the exact specifications of the prophecy both in time and nature. It doubtless occurred there because that was the starting place of the second advent message which would herald the return of Christ.

Testimony of History. More than 25 authentic historical references can be given showing that this event meets the specifications of the prophecy and was unexplainable. See "Source Book" for 21 of them. "The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known."--Noah Webster's Dictionary, edition of 1869. "On the 19th of May, 1780, a wonderful dark day was experienced throughout the northeastern portion of this country. The witnesses of it have described it as supernatural and unaccountable. It was not an ordinary eclipse, for the moon was nearly at its full. It was not owing to a clouded condition of the atmosphere, for the stars were visible. Yet it was so dark from nine o'clock in the morning throughout the usual hours of sunshine, that work had to be suspended, houses had to be lit with candles, the beasts and fowls went to their rest as in the night-time, and although the sun was visible, it had the appearance of being shorn of all its power of illumination."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 383. The great astronomer, Hershel, is reported to have said that "philosophy is at a loss to explain" this "wonderful phenomena of nature."

The Meteoric Shower. v. 13. This prophecy was fulfilled in the shower of shooting stars or meteors which occurred on the night of Nov. 13, 1833 and was the greatest of the kind known in history. They looked as if they came out of the constellation of Leo and from that point in the heavens were thrown in all directions just as a fig tree would throw its unripe figs when shaken by a mighty wind. "The extent of the shower of 1833 was such as to cover no inconsiderable part of the earth's surface; from the middle of the Atlantic on the East to the Pacific on the West, and from the northern coast of South America to undefined regions among the British possessions on the North, the exhibition was visible, and everywhere presented nearly the same appearance."--Prof. Olmsted of Yale College, in "American Journal of Science and Arts", Vol. XXV (1834) pp. 363,364. See "Source Book" for 25 other references.

Further Testimony. "A most marvelous meteoric shower of this class was witnessed on the night of the 13th of November, 1833. It is perhaps remembered by many now present. During the three hours of its continuance, hundreds and thousands of people, of all classes, were thrown into the utmost consternation, and filled with the belief that the very scene described in this text, was actually transpiring. Fiery balls, as luminous and as numerous as the stars, came darting after each other from the sky, with vivid streaks of light trailing in the track of each other, They were of various sizes and degrees of splendor; flashing as they fell, so bright as to awaken people from their sleep. It seemed as if every star in the firmament had suddenly shot from its sphere, and was falling to the earth. And all who saw it will bear witness that it was a most terrific spectacle."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, pp.387,388. (1865)

Other Prophecies. See Eze. 32:7,8; Joel 2:30,31; 3:13-15; Luke 21: 25-32. Still more definitely is the time located in Matt.24:29, and in Mark 13:24-26. "In those days after the tribulation", the first of the signs was to take place. What days? Matt.24:21,22. There are seven prophecies giving the days of papal supremacy as 1260 years from 538 to 1798 A.D. The persecution was shortened by the Reformation and the wounding of the papal head of the beast. Persecution ceased about the middle of the 18th century. Continuing Jesus gave the parable of the fig tree. Matt. 24:29-34. He forbids the setting of the day or hour but He has set the generation which begins and ends with the last warning message. Matt. 24:14; Dan. 8:14,17. The last generation and "the time of the end" are synominous and begin and end with the proclamation of the last message to the world.

Unfulfilled Events. v. 14-16. "The sky was swept aside like a scroll folded up."--Moffatt. Following the signs the prophet describes the opening of the atmospheric heavens for the descent of the Son of God, and the scene of utmost confusion that will take place among the unprepared. The wicked who have worshiped nature instead of the Creator seek shelter in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They cry to be hidden from the face of Him whose message they have refused. Their very cry of distress condemns them as it indicates they have heard the warning and recognize the event.

World Not Converted. "But not greater is the dissolution of physical nature than that of all social classes. Ashen-faced fugitives, shaking like aspen leaves at every joint,--from thrones, from halls of State, from military Great Headquarters, from palatial mansions, from lordly castles, from slave pens and from smiling homes--huddle promiscuously in caverns and rocky recesses of the mountains. Yet there they heave no sigh of relief, for the terrors of the hour are to them but omens of more terrifying overhanging doom, from which they would have the mountains and rocks of their immediate refuge collapsing overhead entomb them."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 137. The text proves that there will still be kings and slaves when Christ returns.

Other Prophecies. Isa. 2:12, 19-21; Zeph. 1:14-18; Luke 23:30. The tears of the "mighty men" are too late for probation will then have forever closed. The Lord wept over them and pled with them but they spurned His entreaties. See Zech. 7:11-13. Theirs are not tears of real penitence because of a godly sorrow and hatred for sin but because of their fear of the punishment for sin and their loss resulting from sin. If forgiven and given another opportunity they would return to their former course. The heart would not be changed as their characters had been fixed. Seven classes are named by the writer who are unprepared which doubtless represents all classes of the wicked. In this event the question of the martyrs' quoted in verse ten is fully answered and their blood avenged.

The Seventh Seal. Rev. 8:1. When the first four seals were broken the voices of the four beasts pealed forth like thunder. The breaking of the fifth brought to the prophet's ears the cries for vengeance from the blood of millions of martyrs. The sixth pictures the convulsions of nature before and at the time of the second advent and the cries of an unredeemed world to the rocks and mountains. The breaking of the seventh scroll is followed by a profound silence or pause. It is like a calm after a terrific storm. The silence is one of intense interest and awful expectancy "In the hearts of the celestial orders, which render them as silent as the grave, all heaven becomes mute and breathless. Saints and angels hush their songs to look and wait for the results....Hence a motionless stillness, more awful, and fuller of thrilling import, than that overwhelming wave of adoration which went over the universe of holy beings when the Lamb first took the book."-"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 2, p. 18.

Two Causes of Silence. First because there can be no joy even in heaven during the awful day of God's vengeance, the execution of His righteous judgments. Eze. 33:11. All heaven is filled with awe and sorrow. Angels cease their singing and weep as the sentence against the wicked host is executed. The second reason is because all the angelic host accompany Christ as He comes to earth to execute judgment and gather the faithful. Doubtless the 24 elders come also to welcome their fellow saints. A half hour of prophetic time is seven and a half days, the time required to descend to earth and return. Then the silence will be broken by shouts of victory.

Memory Text: Rev. 6:13.

THE SEALING MESSAGE

28

Parenthetical Prophecy. Rev. 7:1-3. The chronology of chapter 7 is established by its location between the sixth and seventh seals. It is what is known as a parenthetical prophecy which portrays a work that must be done for the people of God in connection with the sixth seal and before the seventh seal is broken. Between the signs in the sun, moon and stars, and upon the earth, that herald the second advent of Christ, and the advent itself, a final message is to go to the world finishing the gospel commission and sealing a people for their final work on earth and special positions in heaven. The sixth seal includes verses 1-8 of chapter 7, and verses 9-17 belong to the seventh seal.

Answer to Question. When God's wrath is manifested in judgments the wicked recognize it as the day of vengeance and ask, "and who shall be able to stand?" The purpose of the seventh chapter, which is interjected between the last two seals, is to tell who only will be able to stand in the great day of God's indignation. Only those who receive in their foreheads the seal of the living God and are clothed in the righteousness of Christ will be shielded from His judgments. All others will seek to hide in the dens and caves of the mountains where they pray for the rocks and mountains to crush them. The seal of God is the essential preparation for the coming of Christ.

Symbols Employed. It is evident to the most casual reader that symbols are here employed. The four angels or heavenly messengers are seen standing or stationed "at the four corners of the earth."-R.V. This of course means the four points of the compass. See Jer. 49:36. It also indicates a divine management of the world or at least a divine restraining influence in the affairs of men and nations. The restraining influence of the four angels is world-wide so that a heaven-sent message might accomplish its appointed work in all the world. The quieting and controlling influence of angels in the earth is illustrated in Zech. 6:1-8.

Also Agents of Wrath. v. 2. The same angels who were commissioned to hold and "hurt not" till God's servants were sealed, were the angels "to whom it was given to hurt" or destroy when the sealing was done. The angels of mercy are also the angels of wrath. When they let go their hold on world affairs the fierce winds will break forth in all their fury. Winds in the Bible are used as symbolic of strife and war. The four winds represent universal or world war. See Dan. 7:2,3,16,17; Isa. 17:12-14; Jer. 49:35-37; 51:1,2,11; 25:31-33. In the last text the final world war of Armageddon is called a "great whirlwind". Lloyd George called the world war a "hurricane". When the restraining power of the angels of mercy is withdrawn cyclonic war disturbances will sweep the world with the besom of destruction. The same angels who protected and passed over the homes of the Israelites, slew the first-born of Egypt. The guardian angels of Judah visited the camp of the Assyrian army and slew 185,000 men. Angels have ever been God's messengers of mercy and wrath.

Earth, Sea and Trees. These are the things of nature most affected by a wind-storm or cyclone. Both the earth and the sea are used in Scripture to represent the sea of humanity or the nations of earth. See Dan. 7:2,3,17; Rev. 13:1,11; 17:1,15,18. Some believe that the earth here is symbolic of governments, the sea of the sea or mass of humanity, and trees of the rulers or great ones of earth such as are named in Rev. 6:15. In Isa. 10:19 the soldiers of the Assyrian army are called trees and therefore they could symbolize the armies of earth which the four angels prevent from being destroyed till Armageddon. Trees were worshipped by the heathen and might symbolize false gods or religions. Destruction of all things earthly is reserved till the sealing work is ended.

Unseen Forces. While the angels of God are doing their work as messengers of peace, evil angels are busy stirring up strife and unrest. See Rev. 16:13,14,16. These demons of war are the war-lords or Armageddon. They are responsible for all the winds of war and strife that have devastated the earth since the fall of man. They are busy sowing seeds of hate and envy in all the councils of men. Through their influence came the bloody world war and since the Armistice they have broken up more than thirty peace conferences or made their decisions null and void. The world is still seathing with hatred, suspicion and jealousy. "Europe is today filled with hatreds and fears. Every people fears and hates its neighbor, but no people seem aware that a universal apocalyptic peril is suspended over the world."--Ferrero, Italian Historian.

Satanic Influences. "It is really as if, in the atmosphere of the world, there were some mischievous influence at work which troubles and excites every part of it."-Sir Edward Grey during world war. "The nations hurry on towards an unknown goal, as if moved by a mighty unseen hand. Kaisers, czars, kings, and presidents are powerless to stop the march of destiny, and the efforts of legislators to check or divert the moving mass are fearfully impotent."-Editorial in Washington Post, of Mar. 5,1915. "Europe is a seething caldron of international hates, with powerful men in command of the fuel stores feeding the flames and stoking the fires."--Lloyd George in "Is It Peace", p. 138. Evil angels are leading the world toward Armageddon.

Held in Check. The command is to hold till God's servants sealed. v. 2,3. This indicates that the angels had begun to let go of the winds of war. Doubtless fulfilled during world war. The only reason the war didn't end in Armageddon was because God's work wasn't finished. Angels and not men were responsible for the Armistice and have been responsible for every peace conference since. Often since the Armistice the nations have been on the verge of war but unexpectedly the storm clouds pass and peace is restored. All credit is due the angels of peace. Clemenceau said that the peace that followed the world war is only "a lull in the storm", and this is the opinion of most of the statesmen of Europe and of the world. When the angels again let loose the winds of war a storm will break with hurricane and cyclonic fury which will deluge the world with blood. See Jer. 4:19-21; 25:32,33; Isa. 34:1-8.

Restraint Recognized. Sir Philip Gibbs speaks of the world as "a boiling lava of human passion" with only a thin crust above to hold it from breaking forth in all its pent up fury. He said: "Beneath the surface of the present peace there is a lava of hatreds and resentments which bodes ill for the future peace of the world."-"Collier's", Feb. 7,1925. Recognizing a restraining influence that holds in suppression these savage elements, David Lloyd George recently said: "Europe today is a caldron of suspicions and hatreds....There is a suppressed savagery which is but ill concealed, and there are new hatreds which, if they have not been brought into existance during the war, have at any rate come to the surface."--"Is It Peace?" pp. 137,138. Angels are holding the "winds of human passion".

Purpose of Restraint. "Hurt not...till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads". God's servants are sealed during a time of suspended wrath. The judgments of God on the wicked cities of the plain were suspended or held back till Lot and his family were safe. See Gen. 19:22. This is given as an example of the final destruction of the wicked world. See Jude 7. The final judgments on Egypt were restrained till the Hebrews were sealed with the blood on the door-posts. Angels have ever restrained the discordant elements of this rebel world so that the messages of the Prince of Peace might do their work. Their last task is the greatest. "As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle."--Vol. 6:14.

The Sealing Angel. Since angels are God's messengers or ministering spirits they are appropriate symbols of heaven-sent messages. See Rev. 14:6-14. The message-angel ascends from the East, the source of light. "From the sun rising."-R.V. As the sun goes around the world from East to West so has the gospel message belted the globe westward. "Till we have sealed", indicates that the four angels hold the winds in cooperation with the sealing angel and thus assist him in his work. There is perfect harmony and organization in the angelic host in helping to carry out the plan of salvation.

Seal of Security. Eze. 9:2-6,11, is the companion chapter to Rev. 7. The seal or mark secures the receivers from the weapons of the slaughter angels and presenves them from coming wrath. "It is a sign of ownership, a mark of possession, a pledge of security, a badge of service, a token of redemption."--"Pulpit Commentary." "This sealing secures the safety of the sealed ones as the judgment of the great day goes over the nations."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 424.

Sign of Ownership. 2 Tim. 2:19. Jesus was sealed at His baptism. John 6:27. The Father's ownership was expressed in the message, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And only when we depart from all iniquity so that the Lord is well pleased with us are we sealed or secured from wrath and for the kingdom. "This action of sealing with the seal or signet of God, is equivalent to a declaration, that they, who are sealed, appertain to God, and are distinguished as such from others who do not thus belong to Him, and are assured by Him of His protection against evil."-Wordsworth.

Signifies Character. "Sign"-Douay. "Marked with a seal"-Swedish. In Rev. 14:1 the sealed company are said to have the Father's name written in their foreheads. Seal, sign, mark, and name, are synonymous terms. God signs, marks, or seals with His name, and name signifies character. The sealing is done because of victory over every sin and the restoration of the image or character of God in their foreheads or minds. This is accomplished through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit. See Eph. 4:30. "This seal is the holy character which the Holy Spirit creates in and impresses upon man."-S. Conway in "Pulpit Commentary". The seal of the living God can be placed only upon the character of the living God which is imputed and imparted to the believer by faith.

Law Sealed in Heart. A seal is "that which authenticates, confirms, ratifies, makes stable, that which effectually secures."-Webster. A seal is connected with laws or legal documents. It is the law of God that is sealed in the hearts and minds of God's people. See Isa. 8:16,17,20. Writing the law in the heart brings us under the new covenant relationship to God. Heb. 8:10. Thus Jesus who was sealed had the law in His heart. Ps. 40:7,8. Only those who have the law in the heart can know righteousness or have the character of God. Isa. 51:7. The law is written in the heart and mind by the Holy Spirit. 2 Cor. 3:3. The ~~Holy~~-Spirit convicts of sin which is law breaking. 1 John: 3;4. The work of the Holy Spirit as the vicegerent of Christ is to bring transgressors into complete harmony with the law of God, which is the summary of all truth, the standard of God's righteousness, the transcript of His character, and the rule of His judgment.

The Sabbath. The Sabbath is plainly declared to be the sign or seal or mark of holiness of the character of God. See Ex. 31:15-17; Eze. 20:12,20. It is the outward sign of separation from all evil. Isa. 56:2. It is the only command in the law that names the Lawgiver and identifies Him as the Creator. It is thus the memorial of creation and of creative power. Since only creative power can redeem, the Sabbath is also the memorial of redemption or recreation, or sanctification. The Sabbath commandment is the only positive command telling us to do something that tells the world that we are worshipers of the Creator. The others are negative or passive and obedience to them attracts no special attention. The Sabbath is the outward sign by which the world should know that we have the character of God and belong to Him. It is the outward sign of an inward character. Many of course are hanging out a false sign because it isn't backed by character.

Part of Last Message. Rev. 14;6-16. Those who keep the commandments of God warn against a false sign or mark. The world is called upon to worship the Creator of the heavens and the earth because the hour of God's judgment is come. A part of the fourth commandment is here quoted. The 144,000 who are sealed while the winds of human passion are restrained and God's wrath and judgments are suspended, will have holy characters the outward sign of which will be Sabbath observance.

Memory Text: Rev. 7:3.

THE SEALED NUMBER

29

A Definite Number. Rev. 7:4-8. "I heard the number of them which were sealed with the mark."--Swedish. It is evident that a definite and numerable company is here brought to view. The number sealed from each of the twelve tribes tallies with the sum of the whole. There is nothing to indicate that the number is in any sense symbolic of a larger indefinite number. Such a view would make the number meaningless with no means of interpretation. Whenever the Bible mentions a definite number of men or representatives of a larger number it is clearly stated so that the reader is not left to conjecture as to what is meant. See Matt. 14:21; 15:38; Ex. 12:37; Judges 20:15,17,25, 35,46; 1 Chron. 21:5. There is no such qualifying statement regarding the 144,000. Revelation 7 pictures two companies. The first is numerable and the second innumerable. One is definitely numbered and the other cannot be numbered. See verse 9.

Spiritual Israel. The sealing work here described takes place just before the second advent and many years after the dispersion of literal Israel. For many generations the literal tribes have been indistinguishable. Captivity in foreign lands and intermarriage among the tribes have long since obliterated their identity. Before the first advent of Christ the ten tribes had practically disappeared through amalgamation with the nations among whom they were sent into captivity by the Assyrians. The twelve tribes of our text are spiritual and not literal Israelites. While we cannot divide the Christian church into twelve groups according to their characteristics, Christ the Head of the church can. He knows to what nation each belongs and doubtless our names are enrolled in the book of life according to our tribal characteristics. That these divisions now exist is evident from James 1:1. The book of James is a last day book and was not written only for the Jews.

The Overcomes. The term "Israel" had its origin the night Jacob wrestled with the angel. See Gen. 32:24-28. The new name was given him to fit his new character. "Israel" is synonymous with "Christian" and means an overcomer, a victor, a prince or son of God. All true Christians are Israelites and all true Israelites are Christians. See Rom. 2:28,29; 9:6. We become Israelites by accepting Christ and becoming Christians. Gal. 3:29. All who become new creatures in Christ are of "the Israel of God." Gal. 6:15,16. In Rom. 11:17-26 this is illustrated by the grafting process from the wild to the good olive tree. The conclusions is, "And so all Israel shall be saved." It is for this reason that the saved will be divided into twelve nations and will enter the New Jerusalem through twelve gates over which is inscribed the names of the twelve tribes. The city also has twelve foundations on which are the names of the twelve apostle-kings who will rule over the twelve nations. See Rev. 21:12,14, 24-26; Matt. 19;27,28; Heb. 11:10-13.

Two Tribes Omitted. Ephraim and Dan are omitted from this list. Bothewere leaders in idolatry. The tribe of Ephraim was proud, haughty and domineering. They were the leaders in the revolt and apostasy of the ten tribes. Under inspiration Jacob declared that Dan was "a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels so that the rider shall fall backwards." Gen. 49:17. The omission of these two tribes from the redeemed probably indicates that no idolaters or back-biters will be numbered among the 144,000. See Rev. 14:5.

A Special Company. The 144,000 are a separate and special company chosen and sealed for a special purpose and work. Because of their victory over the Laodicean condition and the experience through which they pass in the closing conflict, they are especially honored with power for ministry during the latter rain and with high positions in the kingdom. Their loyalty to the principles of God's government will be tested to the utmost so that it is above question. "Every thing shows that they are a class of the saved, separate and distinct from all others."--"The Apocalypse," Seiss, Vol. 1, p. 407. The fact that exactly 12,000 are sealed from each of the twelve tribes indicates an arbitrary selection of a special and numerable company for a special purpose. Only on this basis can the subject of the 144,000 be properly understood.

Occupy High Positions. The 144,000 are to sit with Christ "in" His throne which represents positions of rulership. Rev. 3:21. They are to serve before His throne "in His temple". Rev. 7:15. They will stand with Christ on Mount Zion at the headquarters of the Heavenly government where they are "before the throne of God" and on "the sea of glass." Rev. 14:1-5; 15:2,3. "The vision of the prophet pictures them standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service."--A.A. 591. "The most exalted of the redeemed host that stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, clad in white, know the conflict of overcoming for they have come up through great tribulation."--Vol. 5:215. "They are made indeed a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. They are marked characters because of their purity of heart and life, their strength and purpose, their firmness and usefulness in the cause of God. They are God's noblemen."--Vol. 5:578. On page 475 we are told that they are "honored" and "a fair miter is set upon their heads. They are to be kings and priests unto God." Of the temple on Mount Zion we are told that "only the 144,000 enter this place", and that in the temple are "tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000 are engraved in letters of gold."--E.W.19. Surely these texts and statements indicate special positions and privileges.

The Twelve Apostles. When Christ came to earth or organize His church He selected just twelve men from among the millions of Israel. It was an arbitrary selection of a definite number which had to be made up when Judas fell out. Peter declared that Judas "was numbered with us" but "his bishoprick let another take." Matthias was chosen to take the place "from which Judas by transgression fell...and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." See Acts 1;15-26. The number twelve must be kept intact. The number was not symbolic of a larger company. It was not made up of twelve "men besides women and children." It is evident from John 13:10,11,18 that Jesus did not chose Judas.

Sealed for Mission. The twelve apostles were selected and trained by Christ for a special service. They were sifted "as wheat" and during the upper room experience they got the victory over every known sin and were sealed. See Eph. 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:21,22. "Christ's visible presence was to be withdrawn from the disciples, but a new endowment of power was to be theirs. The Holy Spirit was to be given them in its fulness, sealing them for their work." --A.A. 30. In order to be sealed "for their work" they had to be sealed before they began their work. The outpouring of the

Spirit was the outward evidence of their acceptance and sealing. It was the sign that they were to "tarry" no longer but were commissioned by heaven to "go" with the gospel message. "This miraculous gift was a strong evidence to the world that their commission bore the signet (seal) of Heaven."--Id. 40.

Positions of Leadership. Rev. 12:1 pictures the gospel church as a woman clothed with the sun and with a crown of twelve stars. The crown of stars represents the rulership of the twelve apostles over the twelve tribes. They are the leading lights of Christendom. "The disciples were to go forth as Christ's witnesses, to declare to the world what they had seen and heard of Him. Their office was the most important to which human beings had ever been called, second only to that of Christ Himself.... As in the Old Testament the twelve patriarchs stood as representatives of Israel, so the twelve apostles stand as representatives of the gospel church."--A.A. 19. See Matt. 19:27,28; Luke 22:28-30. While the blessings of spiritual power came upon all the church, the twelve apostles were especially blessed. "The Holy Spirit especially rested upon the apostles, who were witnesses of our Lord's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension."--E.W. 197.

First-Fruits of Harvest. Of the selection of His disciples during the early days of Christ's ministry we read: "They were the first-fruits of His ministry, and there was joy in the heart of the divine Teacher as these souls responded to His grace."--D.A. 138. "After filling the vacancy in the apostolic number, the disciples gave their time to meditation and prayer, being often in the temple, testifying of Christ, and praising God. The Pentecost was a feast celebrated seven weeks after the Passover. Upon these occasions the Jews were required to repair to the temple and to present the first-fruits of all the harvest. ....On this day of divine appointment, the Lord graciously poured out His Spirit on the little company of believers, who were the first-fruits of the Christian church."--"Spirit of Prophecy," Vol.3, p. 265. Speaking of the selecting of the 12 apostles Giekie says that Jesus "gathered the first-fruits of His kingdom" and to them "delivered the commission,"--Giekie's Life of Christ, p.219

The Early Rain. As soon as the twelve apostles were purified and "sealed for their work" they received the early rain of the Holy Spirit which was "the first-fruits of the Spirit." Rom. 8:23. Then the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all flesh to ripen the gospel grain for the harvest. Under the leadership of the apostles a great harvest was gathered during the first century numbering several millions of souls. Of this bountiful harvest the twelve apostles constituted only the first-fruits sheaf. The first to accept the gospel in any country were called the first-fruits of Christianity in that country. See Rom. 11:15,16; 16:5; 1 Cor.16:15. The early harvest as the result of the early rain was truly "great". Luke 10:2.

First-Fruits of Final Harvest. Rev. 14:4. Because of the worldwide scope of the final harvest the Lord chooses twelve groups of 12,000 each to constitute the first-fruits sheaf. The twelve groups that make up the 144,000 constitute the first-fruits sheaf of the final gospel harvest under the latter rain just as the twelve apostles were the first-fruits sheaf of the Pentecostal harvest. The 144,000 will be the leading lights of the last great evangelical movement when the earth is lightened with the glory of God. Just as the twelve patriarchs were "representatives of Israel," and the twelve apostles of "the gospel church," so the twelve groups making up the 144,000 are the representatives of the great multitude gathered out of the last generation. "This is a selection of representatives, and it shows that in the selection the twelve tribes were given equal consideration." "They are sealed to be lights and guides amidst the darkness and confusion."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy," Stevens, pp. 141,143.

The Two Harvests. There were two chief harvests in Palestine. The first came in the spring between the Passover and Pentecost and the seven weeks were called "the weeks of harvest." This harvest was composed of barley and wheat. It began with the waving of the first-fruits sheaf the day following the Passover. Pentecost was a thanksgiving celebration because of the ingathered harvest. The greatest harvest came in the fall ending with the Feast of Tabernacles which was a harvest ingathering celebration. In this harvest also the first-fruits had to be first reserved. See Ex. 34:22. "In the seventh month came the Feast of Tabernacles, or of Ingathering. This feast acknowledged God's bounty in the products of the orchard, the olive grove, and the vineyard. It was the crowning festal gathering of the year. The land had yielded its increase, the harvests had been gathered into the granaries, the fruits, the oil, and the wine had been stored, the first fruits had been reserved, and now the people came with their tributes of thanksgiving to God, who had thus richly blessed them."--P.P. 540.

The Greatest Gospel Harvest. The two natural harvest of Palestine, which were both preceded by the reservation of the first-fruit sheafs, were typical of the two great gospel harvests at the beginning and close of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. The final gospel harvest like the natural will be the greatest. "The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the 'former rain,' and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant."--Vol. 8:21. "The latter rain will be much more abundant."--C.O.L. 163. The results of the latter rain will be "more abundant" than those of the "former rain." See D.A. 827. "The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close....By thousands of voices all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers....A large number take their stand upon the Lord's side."--G.C. 611,612.

A Great Multitude. Rev. 7:9. Here is pictured the main gospel harvest of the last generation of which the 144,000 are the first-fruits sheaf only. The 144,000 are sealed to receive the unlimited power of the Holy Spirit as were the twelve apostles. While the Spirit will again be poured out upon all flesh, the 144,000, like the twelve apostles, will receive a special and extraordinary impartation of power for leadership and ministry in calling the multitude of God's people out of Babylon. Upon them the Spirit will "come with no modified energy, but in the fulness of divine power."--T.M. 392. The latter rain will not fall upon "all flesh" till after the 144,000 are sealed and receive their baptism of power. See Joel 2:28. The "afterwards" is after the church receives the alarm or Laodicean message which brings to them the early and the latter rain. See verses 1,17,23,25.

Memory Text: Rev. 7:15.

THE INNUMERABLE COMPANY

30

The Final Harvest. We must not forget that Rev. 7 is a parenthetical prophecy between the sixth and seventh seals and that it pictures events and a work to be done in connection with the sixth and before the seventh seal is broken. It is one of the apocalyptic descriptions of the final gospel message to the world with its abundant fruitage. It pictures the final gospel harvest to be gathered out of the last generation while the angels are holding in restraint the winds of war and strife. The ingathering of souls in this great harvest is the result of the last message under the latter rain of the Holy Spirit.

Two Distinct Companies. Rev. 7:9,10. "After this I looked, and a vast host appeared which it was impossible for any one to count, gathered out of every nation and from all tribes and peoples and languages."--Wey. The first part of the chapter describes the gathering and sealing of the 144,000 in twelve companies. This is a numerable company and is called the "first-fruits". Rev. 14:4. The second company is innumerable and is gathered by a world message from "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." This is the same language used in another vision of the last message. Rev. 14:6,7. Only in the last generation is such an extensive message proclaimed. It would be contrary to the chronological order of the seven seals and their events to apply this innumerable company to the redeemed of all past ages. "After this" is used in the descriptions of both companies. See Verses 1,9. It refers to the order in which the scenes appeared to the prophet.

The White Robed Throng. v. 13. The only mention in this chapter of white robes is in regard to the innumerable company. See v. 9. The 144,000 are doubtless also arrayed in white raiment and are so described in Rev. 19:7,8, and elsewhere, but the question here is clearly in regard to the great multitude. The prophet doubtless was satisfied with the description and identity of the 144,000. The answer of the elder to his own question for John's benefit proves conclusively that the great multitude are not the redeemed of all ages but are gathered out of the last generation by the final warning message. The answer of the elder is recorded in verses 14-17.

The Great Tribulation. "The great tribulation."--R.V. "The great Distress."--Moffatt. "The great affliction."--F.D. "The great Persecution."--20th C.N.T. "Have just passed through the great distress."--Wey. The great tribulation here described is still future and comes just before the final deliverance of the church. This cannot refer to the tribulation of the Dark Ages described in Matt. 24:21,22. It is rather the great tribulation during the seven last plagues. To the church it is the "time of Jacob's trouble." See Dan. 12:1,2; Rev. 12:17; 13:15-17; 16. According to Rev. 7:16,17, the innumerable company, like the 144,000, live through the seven last plagues and experience hunger, thirst, heat, and weeping. They will doubtless be translated. There is no evidence that the blessing of translation will be confined to the 144,000

The Tribulation Located. "When He (Christ) leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth....Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old."--G.C. 614. This time of trouble is identified with our text in the following: "'These are they which came out of great tribulation;' they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments....They have seen the earth wasted with famine and pestilence, the sun having power to scorch men with great heat, and they themselves have endured suffering, hunger, and thirst. But 'they hunger no more, neither thirst any more, etc."--Id. 649.

The First-fruits. The 144,000 are the first-fruits sheaf of the final living and translated innumerable harvest, just as the company resurrected and taken to heaven with Christ were the first-fruits of the resurrected innumerable harvest. "Those who came forth from the grave at Christ's resurrection, were raised to everlasting life. They ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave. These, said Christ, are no longer the captives of Satan, I have redeemed them. I have brought them from the grave as the first-fruits of My power, to be with Me where I am, never more to see death or experience sorrow."--D.A.786. The innumerable righteous dead who will be resurrected and gathered into the heavenly garner when the Lord of the harvest comes to gather the sheaves, are pictured in Heb. 11:12,13. There are two parts to the harvest, that of the resurrected dead and that of the translated living, and of each there is a first-fruits sheaf.

Not the Gleanings. Webster defines "first-fruits" as follows: "The fruit or product first matured and collected in any season. The first profits of anything. The first or earliest effect of anything. The first gatherings of a season's produce." The first-fruits are always, as the word implies, the first and never the last of a harvest. The last of a harvest is called the "gleanings". See Ruth 2:2,3; Isa. 24:13. The 144,000 are the "first-fruits" and not the "gleanings" of the innumerable harvest. If the great multitude of our text represented the redeemed of all ages and the 144,000 are the last to be saved out of the world, they would be called the "gleanings" and not the "first-fruits".

The chief Fruits. The first-fruits were the first in quality as well as time. In the margin of Eze. 44:30 they are called the "chief" fruits, and in Num. 18:12, the "best". They were the best of the first to mature and had to be "without blemish". When the grapes, figs, or pomegranates began to get ripe the owner went into his vineyard or orchard and selected the best and largest of that which was maturing early and marked it by tying a fiber around it, saying as he did so, "This shall be among the first fruits." When enough had matured and were marked to fill a basket of each, the owner gathered them and dedicated them to the Lord and His priests. Thus the first-fruits are the first to mature which are carefully selected and marked or sealed for a special and sacred purpose.

A Definite Amount. The first-fruits were always a definite and numerable amount as a sheaf or a basket full compared with the indefinite and innumerable amount of the entire harvest. It was also only a small part of the whole. Lev. 23:10. "Handful."-mar. It was a single sheaf compared to the entire field, a handful compared to a barnfull. See Prov. 3:9,10. The first-fruits were gathered justppreceding the general harvest and were the "first of the ripe fruits." Ex. 22:29. No green or immature fruits could be used for this sacred purpose. The fruit must have come to perfection. The Scriptures mention many kinds of first-fruits. The first born sons were the first-fruits of the marriage and were given a double inheritance and special privileges. The first born of the cattle, sheep, goats, and other animals were called first-fruits. Also the first fleece of wool, the first portion of the oil, wine, wheat, honey, dough, the first product of labor and of the land, and the tithe, were all reckoned as first-fruits and were sacred to the Lord. See Ex. 22:29,30; 23:16,19; Deut.18:3,4; 26:2-10; Num. 18:12-26; Neh. 10:35-37; 2 Chron. 31:4-6.

Dedicated to God. Eze. 48:14. The first-fruits could not be sold or exchanged. The Lord desired the first-fruits rather than the gleanings. Micah 7:1. The farmer in Israel brought his first-fruits to the priest to be dedicated to the Lord. They were deposited "before the altar of the Lord." Ex. 23:19; Lev.23:10. In Deut.26:1-11 we are given a picture of the ceremony of dedication. The people came by districts with their baskets of first-fruits and they usually marched in processions to the sound of music and singing till they were met at the door of the tabernacle by the singing Levites where the described ceremony took place. Not until this was done could the people reap the main harvests. See D.A. 786.

Spiritual First-Fruits. The 12 patriarchs were the first-fruits of the 12 tribes or nations. Later the tribe of Levi became the first-fruits of the nation of Israel. Israel as a whole was declared to be the first-born or first-fruits of all the nations of earth. Ex. 4:22,23. The Lord called Israel the "first-fruits of His increase" indicating that He intended that they should give the gospel to all other nations. See Jer. 2:3. He placed Israel in the center of the earth on the cross roads between the three continents of the Old World that all nations might learn of Him. Christ was the "chief born from the dead" and the "first-fruits" of the resurrection. Rev. 1:5; 1 Cor. 15:20-23. Christ was really the first-fruits of all the first-fruits of the gospel harvest. The 12 apostles were the first-fruits of the early gospel harvest under the early rain and the 144,000 of the final living harvest under the latter rain. In every case the first-fruits came first and were but a small part of the whole.

The Two Harvests. In connection with the spring and fall harvests in Palestine were two groups of typical events. In connection with the "weeks of harvest" was the Passover, the waving of the first-fruits sheaf, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost. These were followed with a long drought with but little fruitage. With the late harvest came the festival of the blowing of trumpets, the ten days of repentance, the day of Atonement, and the Feast of tabernacles or Ingathering. These meet their antitypes in the two groups of events at the beginning and close of Christ's priestly ministry and in connection with the two great gospel harvests. The first was Calvary, the resurrection of Christ, the dedication of the apostle first-fruits, and the Pentecostal outpouring with its resultant gospel harvest. Then came a "falling away" and a long spiritual drought during the middle ages. Just before Christ's work is finished in the sanctuary above the gospel trumpet will be sounded through the world in a warning message, the Laodicean message will be given to the church as a loud call to repentance, the 144,000 first-fruits of the final harvest will be sealed and reserved, the great gospel harvest will be gathered, probation will close, and then will take place the great celebration which will be the antitype of the Feast of Harvest Ingathering.

The Call Out of Babylon. Just as the apostles during the early rain called God's people out of Judaism and heathenism, so the 144,000 during the latter rain call God's people out of Babylon. Rev. 18:1-5. The majority of God's people are still in Babylon when the latter rain and loud cry begin. "Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion....Revelation 18 points to the time when...the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion....Then the light of truth will shine upon all whose hearts are open to receive it, and all the children of the Lord that remain in Babylon will heed the call, 'Come out of her, My people.'"--G.C.390.

A Great Multitude. Rev. 7:9. In Micah 2:12 we are told that the "remnant of Israel" will be a "multitude of men." In Zech. 2:7, 10,11, we are told that when the Lord delivers His people from Babylon and dwells in the midst of Zion "many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day." After the "spiritual revival and reformation" purifies the Laodicean church, "then a multitude not of our faith, seeing that God is with His people, will unite with them in serving the redeemer."--C.O.R. 156. "The good seed is being sown. God will watch over it, causing it to spring up and bring forth an abundant harvest."--Vol. 7:242. "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tender-hearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one."--Vol. 9:189. In Vol. 8:41 we are told that while "company after company from the Lord's army" will join the foe during the shaking time, "tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy" will join the commandment keepers during the latter rain.

Firmament in Reserve. "Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law....The darker the night, the more brilliantly will they shine. What strange work

Elijah would have done in numbering Israel at the time when God's judgments were falling upon the backsliding people! He could only count one on the Lord's side....The word of the Lord surprised him, 'Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed the knee to Baal.'"--P.K. 188,189.

A Timely Warning. "Then let no man attempt to number Israel today, but let every one have a heart of flesh, a heart of tender sympathy, a heart that, like the heart of Christ reaches out for the salvation of a lost world."--Id. Surely this forbids our saying that only 144,000 will be saved out of the last generation. It indicates that such a belief would be a mistake similar to that made by Elijah when he tried to give the exact number. It also indicates that such a position would produce a lack of sympathy such as controls Christ who places no restrictions on the power of the gospel and yearns for the salvation of "whosoever will" be saved. "The message of warning is to go to all countries, tongues, and peoples. The Lord does not call upon His workers to...build up a wall of separation between themselves and the world, by advancing their own ideas and notions....The message of warning has not reached large numbers of the world, in the very cities that are right at hand, and to number Israel is not to work after God's order."--T.M. 202.

Pentecost Exceeded. "All that the apostles did, every church member today is to do, And we are to work with as much more fervor, to be accompanied by the Holy Spirit in as much greater measure, as the increase of wickedness demands a more decided call to repentance....A work similar to that which the Lord did through His delegated messengers after the day of Pentecost He is waiting to do today. At this time, when the end of all things is at hand, should not the zeal of the church exceed that of the early church?...Should not the power of God be even more mightily revealed today than in the time of the apostles?" --Vol. 7:32,33. Under the early rain millions were converted. The number saved then is innumerable; they cannot be counted. The results of the latter rain will be even greater.

Include Many of Heathen. Zech. 13:6. These learn for the first time of the crucifixion when they reach the kingdom and yet they have been saved through the name or character of Christ as revealed to them through His created works and through the operations of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts. See Rom. 1:18-20; 2:14-16; Ps. 19:1-5. "Among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, He sees men and women who are praying for light and knowledge....They are honest in heart, and desire to learn a better way. Although in the depth of heathenism, with no knowledge of the written law of God nor of His Son Jesus, they have revealed in manifold ways the working of a divine power on mind and character.... The Holy Spirit is implanting the grace of Christ in the heart of many a noble seeker after truth, quickening his sympathies contrary to his nature, contrary to his former education. The 'Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,' is shining in his soul; and this Light, if heeded, will guide his feet to the kingdom of God....Heaven's plan of salvation is broad enough to embrace the whole world."--P.K. 376,377, chapter, "Hope for the Heathen."

Every Honest Heart. "Every truly honest soul will come to the light of truth."--G.C. 522. This includes the honest hearts among the heathen who have never heard the written word. "Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God."--D.A. 638. Since this is true and the latter rain has not yet been poured out upon "all flesh", how can we limit the number saved out of the last generation to only 144,000?

The Palm Branches. Rev. 7:9. The palm branch was the Greek and Roman sign of victory. The waving of palm branches was one of the chief features of the Feast of Tabernacles. See Lev.23:39-43. This festival was first inaugurated to celebrate the end of the wilderness wandering of Israel by those who entered the promised land. This festival was also called the Feast of Ingathering and the Homecoming. Because of this Dr. Seiss says that he believes the innumerable company of Rev. 7:9 are translated saints who have lived through the closing scenes to the very end of modern Israel's wilderness wandering. Stevens declares that "they are evidently a throng" who have arrived in heaven "out of special times and experiences."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy," p. 147.

Festival of Rejoicing. Because of God's love and mercy in preserving them through their wilderness sojourn and in forgiving their sins on the day of Atonement which had just passed, the Feast of Tabernacles was the most joyful festival of the year. It also was a thanksgiving celebration because of the bountiful harvest that had just been gathered. For this reason the innumerable company who are redeemed out of the last generation and who constitute the last great gospel harvest are seen with palms in their hands celebrating the antitypical Feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering or Homecoming. They also sing the song of Moses and the Lamb because they have gone through a similar experience to that of ancient Israel in their deliverance at the Red.Sea.

Commemorative and Typical. "The feast of tabernacles was not only commemorative, but typical. It not only pointed back to the wilderness sojourn, but, as the feast of harvest, it celebrated the ingathering of the fruits of the earth, and pointed forward to the great day of final ingathering, when the Lord of the harvest shall send forth His reapers to gather the wheat into His garner....And every voice in the whole universe will unite in joyful praise to God. The people of Israel praised God at the feast of tabernacles as they called to mind His mercy in their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt and His tender care for them during their pilgrim life in the wilderness. They rejoiced also in the consciousness of pardon and acceptance, through the service of the day of atonement, just ended. But when the ransomed of the Lord shall have been safely gathered into the heavenly Canaan,--forever delivered from the bondage of the curse...they will rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Christ's great work of atonement for men will have been completed, and their sins will have been forever blotted out."--P.P. 541,542. This is doubtless the scene pictured in Rev. 7:9-12.

Memory Text: Rev. 7:14.

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

31

The Seven Angels. Rev. 8:2,6. The king of Persia had "seven princes...which saw the king's face, and which sat the first in the kingdom." Esther 1:14. The ancients believed that there were seven presence angels before the throne of God. These are named in the apocryphal book of Enoch, chapter 20. The book of Revelation describes the seven Spirits before the throne, the seven trumpet angels, the seven plague angels, and the seven message angels. Whether these are the same or different sevens we are not told.

The Seven Trumpets. Trumpets were used to awaken the people and sound an alarm on important occasions. It was a time for men to greatly bestir themselves in preparation for some great event. Joel 2:1,15. The trumpet was especially used as an alarm of war and was therefore a symbol of war. Num. 10:9; Jer. 4:19; 42:14. "The trumpets, the usual emblems of war and bloodshed, are chosen as emblems of the series of judgments now to be inflicted."-Moses Stuart. The seven trumpets picture great war scourges or military revolutions which were to visit the earth and overturn, first, the Roman Empire of the West; second, the Empire of the East, and third, the nations of divided Rome or the modern nations of the earth in a final world war terminating at Armageddon.

The Christian Era. The seven trumpets is the third apocalyptic view of world history effecting the Christian era covering the same period as the seven letters and the seven seals. The seals deal with religious events while the trumpets picture political revolutions among the nations. Both terminate in the coming of Christ and the victory of the redeemed. Both have a parenthetical prophecy of God's final gospel message between the sixth and seventh. The terrible war scourges are the natural results of rejecting the messages of the Prince of Peace. Isa. 57:20,21.

General Application. There are two main schools of interpretation of the seven trumpets. The first apply them to the wars of the Roman emperors and the second to the barbaric invasions which destroyed Western and Eastern Rome. A small school of literal interpreters apply them during the final judgments, confounding them with the seven last plagues. The most general and reasonable interpretation of the first six trumpets is expressed by S. Conway in "Pulpit Commentary" as follows: "The wars which led to the fall of the empire find their foreshadowing here. The historic expositors affirm that these alone are what John meant, and that the successive invasions under Alaric, Genseric, Attila, and Odeacer, and, after them, of the Saracens and Turks, are what is portrayed."

Impending Judgments. The seven trumpets are symbolic of impending judgments on a world that rejects the gospel. The fall of Jericho was heralded by the blowing of trumpets. The trumpets of Gideon and his 300 men announced the destruction of the hosts of Median. The blowing of trumpets announced the day of atonement and judgment. See Amos 3:6; Joel 2:1; 1 Thes.4:16.

A Twofold Vision. As in the two previous visions before the prophet was shown the events that were to transpire on earth, he was first given a view into the heavenly sanctuary with the throne of God, the occupants of the throne-room, and the ministration carried on there while the earthly events are taking place. Each of these three visions oover the entire period of Christ's meditorial work in the temple of God. Before revealing the terrible scenes symbolized by the seven trumpets, the prophet is given a view of what is taking place in heaven while God's judgments are being poured out upon the nations of earth who reject the gospel of peace. To accept Christ brings peace; to reject Him brings the sword. Matt. 10:34.

The Mediator. v. 3,4. This "another angel" was doubtless Christ, the Jehovah-Angel or Archangel, the High Priest of the heavenly sanctuary. "The angel here is our Lord, by whom all our prayers have access to God and therefore the apostle says, through Him we offer sacrifices of praise to God continually; and St. John says, He is our Advocate with the Father."-Primasius. This is also the belief of many of the best ancient and modern interpreters. Jesus is indeed the chief of the incense angels. Because He prevailed in prayer on this earth He is fully qualified to present our prayers to the Father with the request that they be answered.

The Incense. Incense for the sanctuary service was compounded by divine prescription. Ex. 30:34-36. It symbolized the merits and perfections of the character of Christ. It represents His righteousness which is placed to the sinners account and is accepted instead of his failures. "The cloud of incense ascending with the prayers of Israel represents His righteousness that alone can make the sinner's prayers acceptable to God."--P.P. 367. "The incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness which through faith is imputed to His people and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God."--Id. p. 353.

The Prayers of Saints. In the Mosaic service the offering of incense was a call to prayer. Incense was offered all through the typical year until the close of the day of atonement. When it ceased to be offered prayers were no longer of any avail. The incense was offered with the prayers "of all saints" indicating that the service includes the whole mediatorial work of Christ from Pentecost to the close of probation. The golden altar in the Mosaic Tabernacle represented the intercessory office of Christ through whom Israel approached God with "much incense". The sacred fire of the altar drew from the incense its fragrance which was carried upward in a cloud of ascending smoke filling the Holy and most holy places and calling all Israel to prayer. Out of fiery trials ascends the most fragrant and effectual prayers to the throne of God. When the church is crushed by persecution the lives of Christians to shed the most fragrant influence in the world.

Close of Probation. v. 5. Out of the very altar of incense comes the fires of wrath. The same fire that carries the prayers of the saints into the presence of God also kindles the fires of God's wrath. The same censer used for intercessory purposes is filled with the fires of judgments. The filling of the censer with fire indicates the end of the meditorial work and the close of probation. It also indicates impending judgments. Lev. 16:12,13; Num. 16:45-48. The close of probation is also identified by the "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake." Rev. 11:15,19; 16:17,18. Both the priestly service in heaven and the war judgments on earth continue at the same time till probation closes, after which the seventh and most terrible war-scourge occurs.

The First Trumpet. v. 6,7. There can be no question but this is symbolic language. However the Lord uses the things of nature to illustrate spiritual truths. Hail and fire mingled with blood are not unknown. "Blood-red rains and blood-red snows are not unknown to the world. We occasionally hear of them. On the 17th of August, 1819, Captain Ross saw the mountains at Baffin's Bay covered for eight miles with blood-red snow, many feet in depth. Saussare found it on Mount St. Bernard, in 1778. Ramond found it on the Pyrenees, and Summerfield in Norway, and others have told of it in other places. So blood-rain has more than once fallen. It is recorded by Cicero, that word was brought to the Roman Senate, on one occasion, that it had rained blood; also that the river Atratus had flowed with a bloody stream. Slight falls of this kind have occured in the Cape Verd Islands, at Lyons, at Genoa, and in the southwest of our own country, to the great alarm of the people of the vicinity."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 2, p. 44.

On January 13, 1932, pink hued snow fell in Durango, Colorado, after white flakes had fallen for an hour. Reported by International News Service, and printed in the Los Angeles Illustrated Daily News.

The Gothic Invasion. The first trumpet is prophetic of the first successful invasion of Rome by the Gothic barbarians from the north under the leadership of Aleric. The "hail" would represent the northern origin of the invaders who came from the shores of the Baltic, and the "fire mingled with blood" indicates the awful slaughter and destruction inflicted by them. They overran Greece, Asia Minor, Italy, Spain, Southern France, and in A.D. 410 captured and sacked the city of Rome. St. Jerome declared that "nothing was left except the sky and the earth."

Attacks in Winter. The northern barbarians usually made their onslaughts in the dead of winter, when the fur-clad warriors crossed the Roman boundary rivers on the ice. Gibbon declares that Decius had scarcely been saluted as emperor "when he was summoned to the banks of the Danube by the invasion of the Goths. This is the first considerable occasion in which history mentions that great people, who afterwards broke the Roman power, sacked the capital, and reigned in Gaul, Spain, and Italy."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 1, p. 518. The same historian in Vol. 3, p. 517 says: "The public devotion of the age was impatient to exalt the saints and martyrs of the Catholic church on the altars of Diana and Hercules. The union of the empire was dissolved; its genius was humbled in the dust; and armies of unknown barbarians, issuing from the frozen regions of the north, had established their victorious reign over the fairest provinces of Europe and Africa."

Awful Slaughter. "He (Theodosius) died in the month of January (395); and before the end of the winter of the same year, the Gothic nation was in arms....Their countrymen...deserted their farms at the first sound of the trumpet....The barriers of the Danube were thrown open; the savage warriors of Scythia issued from their forests; and the uncommon severity of winter allowed the poet to remark, 'that they rolled their ponderous wagons over the broad and icy back of the indignant river'. ....The Goths...were now directed by the bold and artful genius of Alaric....The fertile fields of Phocis and Boeotia were instantly covered by a deluge of Barbarians; who massacred the males of an age to bear arms, and drove away the beautiful females, with the spoil and cattle of the flaming villages. The travelers who visited Greece several years afterwards, could easily discover the deep and bloody traces of the march of the Goths."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 2, chap. 30.

The Fall of Rome. "The hour of doom had struck. It was August of A. D. 410, just 800 years from the date of the capture of Rome by the Gauls. An attempted defense by the people proved to be worse than futile. The city was taken. After twelve days of pillage, Aleric and his men left Rome and continued their course into southern Italy. Town after town was sacked until little remained to appease the vengeance or satisfy the greed of the invaders. The social system of Italy was completely broken up."--"History of the World", Ridpath, Vol. 3, p. 340.

A Crushing Blow. "At last the seals were loosed, and the barbaric tornado was poured out of the north. Through the Alpine passes came the rushing cohort of warriors, each with the rage of Scythia in his stomach and the icicles of the Baltic in his beard. The great hulk of Rome tottered, fell, and lay dead on the earth, like the stump of Dagon."-Id.Vol.3,p.29.

The Third Part. v. 7. "The third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."-R.V. This doubtless represents general destruction like that inflicted by a similar plague in Egypt. Ex. 9:23-25. When the Goths established their kingdom in Spain and southern France we are told that "they took for their own one third of the land."--Sheldon's "General History", p. 233. When the Ostro-Goths settled in Italy they also "took one third of the land, and apportioned it among themselves."-- "History of the World", Ridpath, Vol. 4, p. 408. This was the policy of the barbarians wherever they settled. This might also be interpreted in the light of the fact that the Gothic invasions and destructions were confined mostly to Europe which is one of the three continents or land divisions of the old world.

Memory Text: Rev. 8:4.

THE BURNING MOUNTAIN

32

Divine Judgments. "The uncontrollable progress of avarice, prodigality, extravagance, voluptousness, theatregoing, intemperance, lewdness, in short, all the heathen vices, which Christianity had come to eradicate, still carried the Roman Empire and people with rapid strides toward dissolution, and gave it at last into the hands of the rude but simple and morally vigorous barbarians." "Nothing but the Divine judgment of destruction upon this nominally Christian but essentially heathen world could open the way for the moral regeneration of society. There must be new, fresh nations, if Christian civilization, prepared in the old Roman Empire, was to take firm root and bear ripe fruit."--"History of the Christian Church", Schaff, Vol. 3, sec. 23, par. 2 and sec. 24, par. 2.

To Save Christianity. "Christianity was sent, not to save a decayed and demoralized empire, but the world itself. Not until the Germanic barbarians, with their nobler elements of character, had taken possession of the seats of the old civilization, were the real triumphs of Christianity seen. Had the Roman Empire continued longer, Christianity might have become still more corrupted; in prevailing degeneracy it certainly could not save what was not worth preserving.... The empire of the Caesars was doomed. Retributive justice must march on its majestic course. The empire had accomplished its mission and the time came for it to die."--"Beacon Lights of History", Lord, Vol. 2, pp. 385, 386.

Served Double Purpose. "The Christian church, who ought to have regenerated the empire and sent the gospel to the barbarians, had failed to accomplish either. By receiving unchanged into her fold that old, gangrened, imperial society, the church had rendered herself unable to save it. It must therefore perish. And the neglected barbarians must needs come down themselves and find the gospel, while at the same time they punish and destroy a world which, henceforth, no remedy could cure."--"History of the Middle Ages", Vulleit, p. 10. The historian refers to the paganizing of the church when it was elevated to imperial power and given the sword of the state.

The Second Trumpet. Rev. 8:8,9. "What seemed to be a great mountain ablaze with fire."-Weymouth. "What looked like a huge mountain on fire was hurled into the sea."-Moffatt. Again the Lord turns to the realm of nature to illustrate prophetic truths. Mount Sinai became a burning mountain under the feet of the Great Lawgiver. Ex. 19:18; Deut. 4:11. The symbol is doubtless that of a great volcano belching forth its fiery streams of lava and columns of smoke so that the mountain looked as if it were on fire. Or it may have had the appearance of an enormous blazing meteor flashing through the sky and then plunging into the Mediterranean. The destruction that followed includes a third of the commerce of the sea and so much life that the waters were dyed with blood.

The Vandals. The scene of the second trumpet changes from the shores of the Baltic to the coasts and waters of the Mediterranean. It is said that this name means "the middle of the earth" and certainly the Mediterranean was the center of the Roman world and of the commerce and life of many of the ancient nations. The blazing mountain is an appropriate symbol of the second barbarian invasion that scourged imperial Rome, humbled her pride, and broke her power. The Vandals under the leadership of "the terrible Genseric" was one of the fiercest and most destructive of the barbarian nations that deluged Rome with a rain of fire and blood during the fourth and fifth centuries.

"Cast into the Sea." As the hail and fire mingled with blood were cast upon the earth, the burning mountain was cast into the sea. This indicates that another power had done the casting or was responsible for their invasions of Rome. Neither the Goths nor the Vandals came voluntarily upon Roman territory but were driven out of their own countries by the Huns and literally thrust upon the empire. When the Huns burst into Europe from the east, the Goths were pushed across the Danube into Roman territory while the Vandals fled in a southwesterly direction traversing the entire length of Germany. When the legions of Rome who were guarding the Rhine were called home to defend Rome against the Goths, the Vandals entered France, or Gaul, unopposed. They marched through France into Spain leaving devastation and ruin in their wake.

Cast by the Huns. "The fifth century is known as 'the Era of Great Migration". During this period, Europe was turbulent with the movements of the restless Germans. Pressed by the Huns, different tribes poured south and west with irrestible fury, arms in hand, seeking new honors in the crumbling Roman Empire. It was nearly two centuries before the turmoil subsided enough to note the changes which had taken place. Aleric, the Goth, Attila, the Hun, and Genseric, the Vandal, were conspicuous in the grand catastrophe."--"General History", Barnes, pp. 266,7.

Became a Naval Power. In 431 the Vandals crossed the straits of Gibralter in vessels furnished by the Spaniards who were glad to see them depart. They rook possession of Carthage and the Roman province of Africa which furnished much wealth and food for the cities of Italy. The mountain was cast into the sea, and the Valdals became a maritime power and were called the "pirates of the sea". "Their narrow limits were pressed and confined on either side, by the sandy desert and the Mediterranean. The discovery and conquest of the Black nations that might dwell beneath the torrid zone could not tempt the national ambition of Genseric; but he cast his eyes toward the sea: he resolved to create a naval power, and his bold resolution was executed with steady and active perseverance. The woods of Mount Atlas afforded an inexhaustible nursery of timber. His new subjects were skilled in the arts of navigation and shipbuilding; he animated his daring Vandals to embrace a mode of warfare which would render every maritime country accessible to his arms; the Moors and Africans were allured by the hopes of plunder; and, after an interval of six centuries, the fleets that issued from the ports of Carthage again claimed the empire of the Mediterranean."—"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 3, chap. 36.

Sea Became Blood. The Romans and Spaniards who could escape the ravages of the Vandals fled to the islands of the Mediterranean for refuge. These hosts of refugees added to the native population aggregated several missions. The raising of livestock, especially cattle, was their chief industry. These islands, occupying the western third of the Mediterranean Sea, were overrun by the barbarians. The cattle were destroyed for food and the people slaughtered or taken captive. The prophet described the carnage in the language: "The third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died."

Slaughter Described. A Spanish historian describes the fate of the unfortunate people who inhabited the coasts of the Mediterranean during the Vandal attacks: "The irruption of these nations was followed by the most dreadful calamities, as the barbarians exercised their indiscriminate cruelty on the unfortunate Romans and Spaniards, and ravaged with equal fury the cities and the open country. The progress of famine reduced the miserable inhabitants who fed on the flesh of their fellow creatures; and even the wild beasts, who multiplied without control in the desert, were exasperated by the taste of blood and the impatience of hunger, boldly to attack and devour their human prey. Pestilence soon appeared, the inseparable companion of famine; a large portion of the people was swept away; and the groans of the dying excited only the envy of their surviving friends. At length the barbarians, satiated with carnage and rapine, and afflicted with the contagious evils which they themselves had introduced, fixed their permanent seats in the depopulated country."—Quoted in "Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 3, pp. 433, 434.

413

Capture of Rome. "A Vandal fleet anchored at the mouth of the Tiber. Rome was captured and for fourteen days and nights was given up to indiscriminate pillage. The treasures of the Eternal City were carried on board the Vandal ships; and wanton destruction, fire, and murder added to the horrors of the sack. She that had despoiled the nations was in her turn outraged and left lying in her own blood by the banks of the Tiber. From this time for a period of eight years, the Vandals became the terror of the Mediterranean. The coasts of all the countries from Gibraltar to Egypt were assailed by the piratical craft of Genseric."—"History of the World," Ridpath, Vol. 3, pp.429,30. Among the spoils carried to Carthage was the seven branched candlestick which Titus had brought from Jerusalem to Rome to grace his triumph. The ships of Genseric carried soldiers and horses and everywhere the ships touched the shores of the Mediterranean the country far inland was overrun by the cavalry. Houses and villages and captured ships were usually burned and the plunder carried to Carthage.

Great Naval Disasters. In 457 A.D., Marjoran, the Western Emperor, assembled a fleet of 300 war vessels besides transports and smaller vessels accompanied by 75,000 marines. The fleet sailed to the western end of the Mediterranean to sweep Genseric from the sea. While anchored in the harbor of Carthagena, Spain, one dark night Genseric, aided by a favorable wind, surprised and burned the fleet. In 468, Leo, the Eastern Emperor, sent a fleet of 1,113 ships from Constantinople to destroy Genseric and his ships. An army of 100,000 men accompanied the ships. The army was landed on the coast of Africa forty miles east of Carthage and marched on the city to cooperate with the ships. The fleet sailed into the harbor of Carthage to await a favorable time to attack. The Vandal capital was at the mercy of the Romans and Genseric asked for and obtained by birbery a five days truce that he might prepare his terms of surrender. Consent to this truce by Basiliscus, the commander of the Roman fleet, proved fatal.

Great Vandal Victory. "During the short interval, the wind became favorable to the designs of Genseric. He manned his largest ships of war with the bravest of the Moors and Vandals; and they towed after them many large barks, filled with combustible materials. In the obscurity of the night, these destructive vessels were impelled against the unguarded and unsuspecting fleet of the Romans, who were awakened by the sense of their instand danger. The close and crowded order assisted the progress of the fire, and was communicated with rapid and irrestible violence; and the noise of the wind, the crackling of the flames, the dissonant cries of the soldiers and mariners, who could neither command nor obey, increased the horror of the nocturnal tumult: Whilst they labored to extricate themselves from the fire-ships, and to save at least a part of the navy, the galleys of Genseric assaulted them with temperate and disciplined valor; and many of the Romans, who escaped the fury of the flames, were destroyed or taken by the victorious Vandals." --"Gibbon's Roman Empire," Vol. 3, chap. 36, pp. 243,244.

Third of Ships Destroyed. Basiliscus, who was fartherest removed from danger disgracefully fled at the beginning of the battle taking with him a little more than a third of his fleet, and sailed for Constantinople where he was relieved of his command. The remainder of the armada was completely destroyed. The destruction of these two great fleets and many smaller ones by the "pirates of the sea" using fire as the principal weapon, furnishes a striking fulfillment of the symbolic prophecy. It was indeed a burning mountain cast into the sea. The victorious operations of Genseric were confined mostly to the western third of the Mediterranean sea between Gibraltar and the southern part of Italy. A third part of the ships were destroyed, a third part of the creatures died, so that a third part of the sea was figuratively turned to blood.

Memory Text: Rev. 8:8.

THE BLAZING METEOR

33

Judgments on Rome. "Rome, who, upon her frontiers, discovers only solitudes, thinks she has nothing to fear; yet it is in these empty camps that the Almighty is gathering the army of nations. More than four hundred years will be necessary to gather this great throng, although the barbarians are rushing forward like the waves of the sea. A miraculous instinct leads them....They have heard a voice from above calling them from the north and the south, from the west and the east. Who are they? God alone knows their true names. As unknown as the deserts from which they emerge, they ignore whence they come, but they know whither they are going; they are marching to the capital, summoned there, as they claim, for the destruction of the Roman Empire, as to a banquet."--"Etudes Historiques," pp. 80,81. This was especially true of the third trumpet.

The Third Trumpet. Rev. 8:10,11. "Burning as a torch."--R.V. "A hugh star blazing like a torch dropped out of the sky."-Moffatt. This is clearly a meteor which appeared suddenly, had a short and brilliant career, and then disappeared as suddenly and unexpectedly as it appeared. "To fulfill this prophecy it is necessary that there should be some chiefton or warrior who might be compared to a blazing meteor; whose course would be singularly brilliant; who would appear suddenly like a blazing star, and then disappear like a star whose light was quenched in the waters. That the desolating course of this meteor would be mainly on those portions of the world that amounded with springs of water and running streams; that an effect would be produced as if those streams and fountains were made bitter; that is, that many persons would perish, and that wide desolations would be caused in the vicinity of those rivers and streams, as if a bitter and baleful star should fall into the waters, and death should spread over the lands adjacent to them, and watered by them."--Albert Barnes in "Notes on Revelation."

The Hun Invasion. The third barbarian horde that scourged Rome and especially the empire of the West were the Huns under the leadership of Attila. It is significant that Attila termed himself "The Scourge of God". He claimed that he was divinely led to scourge the Roman Empire. The symbolic meteor representing the Huns, "fell" and was not "cast" upon the empire, as were the Goths and Vandals. The Huns were not driven by another foe but came voluntarily except as they claimed divine leadership. They were of Mongolian stock and were Asiatics. They began their movement westward from North China in the first century. They were a shepherd people whose movements were controlled largely by the abundance or scarcity of pasture. In the beginning of the fourth century they occupied the vast plains north of the Caspian Sea and came into contact with the outposts of the Ostrogoths. In the latter part of the fourth century they again marched westward driving the Teutons before them. Early in the fifth century Attila established his seat of government on the plains east of the Danube, one of the boundary rivers of the Roman Empire, and forced the Goths across the river into Roman territory.

Description of Huns. "They were short, thickset, with flat noses, deep-sunk eyes, and a yellow complexion. Their faces were hideously scarred with slashes to prevent the growth of the beard. A historian of the time compared them in their ugliness to the grinning heads clumsily carved on the posts of bridges. They built no cities or houses, and never came under a roof except in superstituous dread. They were clad in skins, which were never changed until they rotted off. They lived on horseback, carrying their families and all their possessions in large wagons."--"General History", Barnes, p. 265, Footnote. Gibbon declared that their "figures were scarcely human". Their food consisted wholly of milk and raw meat.

Third Part of Rivers. Because the commerce of the empire centered in the Mediterranean the Romans termed it "Our Own Sea", or, "A Vast Roman Lake". Of still greater importance to the existance of the empire were the three great boundary rivers by which the legions of Rome kept back the barbarian tribes for centuries. These were the Rhine and Danube in the north and the Euphrates in the east. The Huns occupied the valley of the Danube with all its tributaries. "The Huns were masters of the great river."--Gibbon. Thus the meteor fell upon one third of , or one of the three rivers upon which the life of the empire depended.

Campaigns of Attila. Attila's first invasion was to the very walls of Constantinople. Gibbon says that he destroyed 70 cities in his progress and forced upon the emperor of the East an oppressive peace. In 451 he declared war on the Western empire and with 500,000 men swept through Germany pillaging as he went. He invaded Gaul and sacked and burned most of the cities of France as far south as Orleans. On the battle field of Chalons on the Marne the combined armies of the Romans and the Visigoths met him in one of the bloodiest and most decisive battles of history. A million men were engaged, 500,000 on each side. At the close of the day 160,000 men lay dead on the field. One historian places the dead as high as 300,000. Both armies retired exhausted from the field of battle when darkness came, neither knowing who was the victor. During the night the Huns retired. They then invaded Italy and destroyed the cities of northern Italy and reduced the country to the condition of a desert. Attila claimed that the grass never again grew where his horse's feet had trod.

Called Wormwood. The New Standard Bible Dictionary says that wormwood means a curse. Wormwood was a bitter plant that grew in Palestine and was a type of bitter sorrow. Lam. 3:19; Jer. 9:15. The star would cause bitter sorrow and death. "Many men died from drinking it."-20th C.N.T. "Vast numbers of people died from drinking the water."-Weymouth. On March 21, 1823 there was a great volcanic explosion in one of the Aleutian Islands which resulted in the waters of the river being turned to the color of beer and becoming extremely bitter so that it was for a time unfit for use. Each scourge becomes worse than the one before. The first affected vegetation, the second animal life, and the third the human race.

Suddenly Disappeared. Like a shooting star the Huns suddenly disappeared. In 453 Attila returned to the banks of the Danube where he suddenly died from the bursting of an artery. The Huns then rapidly dispersed and mysteriously disappeared. "Hereafter the Huns, as far as that name goes in Furope, the Huns of Attila, disappeared out of history."-H.G.Wells. "The Huns rapidly dispersed. The main body seems to have returned to the region about the river Ural."--Standard Encyclopedia. What could better represent the spectacular career of Attila and the Huns than a flashing meteor.

The Fourth Trumpet. Rev. 8:12. The final blow that completed the destruction of Western Rome was struck by the northern Teutonic tribes under the leadership of Odoacer, king of the Heruli. "Now out of the north came Odoacer, king of the Heruli, a nation of Germans,-joined as he was by many other tribes....The crisis was at hand. The great clock in the tower of fate sounded solemnly from the direction of the Alps, and was heard to the coast lines of Brittium. The ghost of Caesar's victims rose from the earth, and hovered in dense clouds along the north. Then the apparition became real."--"History of the World", Ridpath, Vol. 3, p. 349. The historian then describes the successes of Odoacer and his barbarians in defeating the Roman armies and crushing the last vestige of Roman power.

The Ghost of Rome. Ridpath then describes another apparition, a gigantic specter of the Rome that was. "It was the ghost of the Western Empire of the Romans. The colossal fabric, planted of old time by the patrician fathers, strengthened and made great amid the bloody struggles of the republic, transformed by the genius of Julius Caesar, and disgraced and degraded by the licentiousness of the later emperors, fell prostrate in the dust and expired. On the broken statue of Victory in the Forum, a Gothic soldier sat whetting his sword, and a Gaulish mercenary for the sport of his companions thrust a barbarous spearhead into the nostril of Jupiter Capitolinus. The god did not resent it."--Id. p. 350.

The Dark Ages. The date 476 A.D. not only marks the end of the Roman Empire of the West, but it also introduced that long period of demoralization in Europe, known as the "Dark Ages". Speaking of conditions during these ages H.G. Wells says: "The daily life of the time was going on at a very low level indeed, physically, intellectually, and morally. It is frequently said that Europe, in the sixth and seventh centuries lapsed into barbarism; but that does not explain the reality of the case. It is more correct to say that the civilization of the Roman Empire had passed into a phase of extreme demoralization....The state of Europe beneath its political fragmentation was a social disorder. Its morale...was that of the slum."--"Outline of History", pp. 527, 528. It is far more reasonable to apply verse 12 to the dark ages than to the destruction of the official and lawmaking bodies of the imperial government.

The Third Part. "Then the fourth angel blew his trumpet; and a curse fell upon a third part of the sun, a third part of the moon, and a third part of the stars, so that a third part of them were darkened, for a third of the day, and also of the night, there was no light."-Weymouth. Europe, Asia, and Africa were the three divisions of land that constituted the geographical knowledge of the time. They were the then known world. One of these, Europe, passed through that long period of more than six centuries when the "Sun of Righteousness" was eclipsed and driven into obscurity, and God's "Two Witnesses" had to do their prophesying clothed in sackcloth. In Revelation 12 the sun is symbolic of the righteousness of Christ which constituted the church the "light of the world". The moon represents the word of God which is the foundation of the church. The 12 stars is symbolic of the apostolic leadership of the church. The ministers or leaders of the seven churches are called stars. Rev. 1:20. The gospel day covers about 2000 years, a third of which is between six and seven centuries. "The third of them was eclipsed."--20th C.N.T.

A Profound Night. "But no one can make a civilization. In vain did Charlemagne kindle the flame; it was only a passing torch in the midst of a profound night. In vain did he strive to create commerce and trace with his own hand the plan of a canal to connect the Danube and the Rhine. The ages of commerce and industry were yet far distant. In vain did he unite Germany into one vast empire; even while he lived he felt it breaking in his hands. And this vast and wise organism, this revived civilization, all disappeared with him who called it forth."--"General History", Barnes, p. 337, Note. Every effort to lead the world out of the darkness into the light were futile.

Darkness Confined to Europe. "Amid the ignorance which enveloped Europe during the Dark Ages, the Saracen Empire was dotted over with schools, to which students resorted from all parts of the world. There were colleges in Mongolia, Tartary, Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Morocco, Fez, and Spain. The vixies of a sultan consecrated 200,000 pieces of gold to found a college at Bagdad. A physician refused to go to Bokhara, at the invitation of the Sultan, on the plea that his private library would make four hundred camel loads. Great public libraries were collected, one at Cairo, being said to number 100,000 volumes, and the one of the Spanish caliphs, 600,000."--Id. p. 331, Note. Only one of the three great land divisions of the old world was darkened by the eclipse. The final destruction of the Western Roman Empire and the subsequent Dark Ages constitutes a striking fulfillment of the symbolisms of the fourth trumpet. All came as the result of the rejection of the gospel of the Prince of Peace. Strife and darkness come to nations and individuals who refuse to walk in the light.

Memory Text: Rev. 8:10.

Woe Trumpets. Rev. 8:13. "Eagle"-Most versions. This was doubtless one of the cherubs which in chapter four was symbolized by a spread eagle to represent far vision and swiftness. The announcement of this angel indicates that the fearful events of the first four trumpets were small compared with the desolating scourges of the three yet to come. Because of their severity they are distinguished from the others as "woe" trumpets. These war scourges would lay Eastern Rome in the dust and wreck the modern nations in the awful Armageddon cataclysm.

The Fifth Trumpet. Rev. 9:1-3. About the time the fifth trumpet was due Western Asia was controlled by two implacable rivals, Persia and the Eastern Roman Empire. Chosroes was the king of Persia and he led his armies against his Roman rival. During the death grapple between these two empires over the supremacy of the East, which resulted in the death of Chosroes and the dissolution of his empire, another power was arising out of obscurity which was destined to fulfill the specifications of the first woe trumpet.

The Fallen Star. "A star from heaven fallen unto the earth."-R.V. "A star which had fallen to earth."-Wey. Most versions and manuscripts indicate that the star had already fallen when the fifth trumpet sounded. It was a fallen star that opened the bottomless pit. In verse 11 that star is called "the angel of the bottomless pit", who primarilly is Satan. Satan is the fallen star. Isa. 14:12; Luke 10:18. "It seems that Satan himself is referred to in this symbol."-Pulpit Commentary. "The fallen star is Satan."-Geo. W. Davis in "The Patmos Vision". This is also the belief of Wordsworth, Seiss and many other commentators.

The Human Instrument. Satan always does his work through human agents, and secondarily this star represents Mohammed and his successors. But the baneful influence of the great religious revolution of Mohammedism, with its sensual moral standards, and the fanatical enthusiasm and zeal with which it was propagated, calls for more than human power and direction. It was Satan's master mind that invented and loosed upon the world the false religion of Mohammed that has so long cursed the human family and still numbers as its adherents more than 200,000,000 souls.

The Bottomless Pit. "The abyss"-R.V. The earth in its desolate condition during the millennium is called the abyss or bottomless pit. See Rev. 20. This term appropriately represents the desert wastes of Arabia out of which came the Saracen hordes like swarms of locusts to spread ruin and desolation over the fairest portions of Asia and Europe. Speaking of the desolate country of Arabia Gibbon says: "But in the dreary waste of Arabia, a boundless level of sand is intersected by sharp and naked mountains; and the face of the desert, without shade or shelter, is scorched by the direct and intense rays of a tropical sun. Instead of refreshing breezes, the winds, particularly from the southwest, diffuse a noxious and even deadly vapor; the hillocks of sand which alternately rise and scatter are compared to the billows of the ocean, and whole caravans, whole armies, have been lost and buried in the whirlwind."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 3, pp. 492, 493.

The Key. "The key of the well-pit of the abyss."--Eng. R. V. The key "was given" to Mohammed by which he opened the abyss and released the swarms of symbolic locusts. "The Arabians up to the time of Mohammed...were divided into small tribes, each having its leader, called sheik, or emir. In religion they were worshipers of fire or the stars."--"General History", Anderson, p. 224, Note. Mohammed claimed to have received the Koran from the angel Gabriel by revelation. He had come in contact with the Christians and the Jews whose religions he had studied. The Koran was doubtless the key for he claimed it "was given him". With this pretended revelation which made him a prophet of God, Mohammed united the roving and unorganized Saracen bands and poured them in an irrestable torrent upon the tottering civilization of Eastern Rome. "We shall not be wrong in making religious feeling its chief moving principle."-"Medieval and Modern History", Myers, p. 51, Note. The battle cry of Mohammed was, "The sword is the key to heaven and to hell."

Smoke of a Great Furnace. "Smoke poured out of the pit like the smoke of a huge furnace."-Moffatt, The light of the sun was obscured by the smoke and not by the locusts. The sun is symbolic of the gospel light and the Satanic Moslem religion that eclipsed it is fitly represented by the black smoke of a furnace. For centuries the Sun of Righteousness was eclipsed wherever the dark Moslem cloud drifted. Darkness still prevails wherever the Moslem religion predominates. Speaking of the first conquests of the Saracens in Persia, Ridpath says: "The cloud, apparently no larger than the hand of a man, rising from the shores of the Red Sea, had spread out to the east until its shadow fell beyond the valley of the Euphrates and the lofty range of Zagros."--"History of the World", Vol. 4, p. 476.

Symbolic Locusts. v. 3. Arabia is the home of locusts and from there they swarm into the surrounding countries and destroy vegetation. Dr. Adam Clarke says that this description fits the Saracens better than any other people. A traveler in Syria said: "It is difficult to express the effect produced on us by the sight of the whole atmosphere filled on all sides and to a great height by an innumerable quantity of these insects, whose flight was slow and uniform, and whose noise resembled that of rain; the sky was darkened, and the light of the sun considerably weakened. In a moment the terraces of the houses, the streets, and all the fields were covered with the insects."--"Voyage dans l'Empire Ottoman", Ollivier, Vol. 2, p. 424. Ridpath unconsciously uses the very symbol of Scripture: "Not it was (in 672) that the Saracens, frenzied with religious zeal, blown up like a cloud of locusts from the south, settled before Constantinople."--Vol. 3, p. 361.

Saracen Calvary. v. 7. "Like horses equipt for battle."-20th C.N.T. "Like swarms from the hive, or flights of locusts darkening the land, tribe after tribe issued forth."--"The Caliphate", Sir. Wm. Muir, p. 44. The Arabs were the most expert horsemen in the world and they lived and fought so much on their horses that the horse and rider were almost inseparable. With the swiftness of flying locusts they rode on their famous Arabian horses into battle. They fought almost exclusively on horseback.

Horsemen Described. "On their heads were what appeared to be crowns that shone like gold."--20th C.N.T. "Wreaths that looked like gold."--Weymouth. This doubtless refers to the turbans worn by the Saracens which were of a greenish golden color. See "Barnes' General History,"p.327, and "Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 5, p. 26. The Saracen warriors wore beards of which they were very proud and sensitive. See Id. Vol.3,p.500. Thus "Their faces were as the faces of men." While their faces were masculine their hair was feminine. Verse 8. History also records the fact that the Saracen men, like the women, wore long hair.

Women Also Fought. The Saracen women constituted an important part of the fighting force. During a battle "after the ancient Arab fashion, the shrill voices of the women in the rear encouraged the men."--"Outline of History", Wells, Vol.2,p.19. Gibbon declares that three times during the great battle of Tiberias when the weight of the Roman cavalry compelled the Saracens to retreat each time they were "driven back to the charge by the reproaches and blows of the women."

Fought Like Lions. "The teeth resembled those of lions."-Wey. The patriarch of Alexandria observes that the Saracens fought with the courage and savagery of lions. As they entered the battle of Tiberias their general addressed them as follows: "Victory or Paradise is before you: the devil and hell-fire are behind you, Charge." To die in battle for the faith of Islam was an assurance of Paradise, and cowardice and treason meant punishment in the fires of hell. The greatest courage known is that born of a religious conviction of duty or fear of torment. The Saracens were controlled by religious fanaticism.

Uniforms or Breastplates. v. 9. "They had scales like iron coats of mail."-Moffatt. "Seemed to be made of steel."-Wey. Nearly all the cavalrymen of that period including the Saracens wore a leather or iron cuirass or breastplate which crossed the breast and sometimes also the back. The symbolic locusts made a deafening noise as they swiftly moved into battle. It is said that one of the most awe-inspiring sights ever witnessed was that of a large troop of cavalry galloping into battle. "The noise of their wings was like the noise of chariots drawn by many horses, galloping into battle."-20th C.N.T. To the prophet the noise resembled not only the clatter of the hoofs of many horses but also the rumble of chariot wheels. Chariots were an important part of the fighting equipment of the Roman soldiers of John's day.

The Weapons of War. v.10. The Saracen weapons consisted of the lance and the bow and arrows. With these they fought as skillfully while retreating as while charging. They fought something like the American Indian on the plains of the middle west. With unerring aim and deadly results the Saracen archers discharged their arrows backward over the horses tails. Neibuhr's description of a locust is interesting in the light of this prophetic description of the Saracen cavalry: "In head like the horse, in breast like the lion, in feet like the camel, in body like the serpent, in tail like the scorpion, in antennae like a virgin's hair."

Commissioned to Torment. v.10,5. "Their mission was not to kill, but to cause awful agony for five months."-Wey. Five Hebrew months of 30 days each total 150 prophetic days or literal years. For a century and a half the Saracens would "hurt" and "torment" Eastern Rome and Europe but they would not kill or destroy. The killing was reserved for the Turk under the second woe. During all the invasions and conquests of the Saracens the empire was maintained and the capital city, Constantinople, resisted every attack. The Moslems attacked the city no less than ten times but without avail. "To Constantinople belongs the honor of having been the first and strongest bridle of the Saracens."--The Standard Encyclopedia, Art.,"Caliph".

Their Plan Altered. The ambition of the Saracens was to make Islam the religion of the world. They must first crush all other religions and in this scheme Christianity was their first objective. After the conquest of Asia and North Africa the plan was to overrun Europe but Constantinople stood in their way. The failure to capture this strategic city compelled them to enter Europe by way of the Strait of Gibraltar. They intended to make a complete circuit of the Mediterranean but were brought to a stop by Charles Martel in the famous battle of Tours in 732 A.D. Their part was only to "hurt".

As Sting of Scorpion. Arabia is the home of the scorpion as well as the locusts. They are very numerous and are found a foot in length. They are not slow and sluggish as in many other parts of the world, but are speedy and vigorous, striking unexpectedly. The sting is not always deadly but is very painful. Poisoned arrows used in warfare were sometimes called scorpions. Seneca described the torment of the poisoned arrows used in his time, and Isadore described them thus: "The scorpion is a poisoned arrow shot from a bow or other instrument; which, when it wounds a man, deposits the poison, with which it is covered, in the wound; whence it has the name of scorpion."

Seek Death. v.6. See Job 3:20-22. "For death is not subject to the will of man. To die is sweet to the wretched; but wished-for death flees away. Yet when it is not desired, it comes with the hastieth strides."-Maximus, Fleg. 1,v.,111. The Saracens offered their victims the choice between the sword, the Koran, and heavy tribute. There were millions whose real choice was death but such a wholesale slaughter was unthinkable even by the Saracens, so they condemned all captives to perpetual slavery which was often worse than death. History tells us that they took from North Africa alone 180,000 prisoners and sold them as slaves. Death would have been preferable.

Memory Text: Rev. 9:1

THE TORMENTING SARACENS

35

Commissioned to Hurt. Rev. 9:5. "Their mission was not to kill, but to cause awful agony for five months."-Wey. The attacks on vegetation by locusts is during the five summer months between April and September. For five prophetic months the Saracens were commissioned to "hurt" and "torment" the Eastern Empire but they were not to kill or destroy it. The destruction would take place under the second woe.

Prophetic Time. The five months or 150 days are prophetic and not literal. In symbolic prophecy a day represents a year. Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6. "God showeth Ezekiel the rule of prophecy", at the top of page. Dr. Alexander Campbell declared that on the "day-for-a-year" theory "there is no controversy among Catholics or Protestants." Speaking of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9, Henry Cooke says: "That each of the weeks mentioned denotes seven years, each day for a year, Eze. 4:6: and that the whole of the numbers is intended to point out the time of our Saviour's appearance, is also agreed."--"New Self-Interpreting Bible Library." Vol. 3. "The days, without doubt, are to be taken... not for natural, but for prophetic days or years."--"Dessertations on the Prophecies," Thomas Newton, pp. 290,291. This method of reckoning was not only used by the Jews but also by the Romans and other nations. "It was the custom in some republics not to oblige a man to go to the wars after the sixth week, i.e. after forty and two years of age."--Macrobius,Somn. Scip. lib. 1, C. VI.

150 Years. History fully corroborates the prophecy that the Saracenic reign as an independent, tormenting power continued for a century and a half. 150 years spans the crest of the Saracenic movement. While there were attacks and minor conquests before and after that period, they were those of the unorganized tribes of Arabia, or the disorganized and defeated forces of the fast declining empire of the Saracens, before they merged into the Turkish power that succeeded them.

Time Located. v. 3-5. It is very evident that the 150 years must begin with the time when the Saracens were "given power" as "the scorpions of the earth" to hurt and torment for five prophetic months, and also, that this tormenting would begin with the "command" on the part of their leader to torment. The tormenting covers a century and a half and begins with the time they were commissioned or commanded to hurt some and not to hurt others. Those who "have not the seal of God in their foreheads" doubtless included, in its broad sense, all who were not Moslem believers. The Moslems believed that they had the seal of God. Also the Abysinians were Sabbath keepers and were providentially preserved from destruction by the Moslems. The predicted command was given by Abu-Bekr at the beginning of the invasion of Syria in the year 632 A.D. Mohammed died in the year 632 and Abu-Bekr succeeded him. No sooner had he taken control of the government than he dispatched a letter to the Arabian tribes calling upon them to rally to the standard of the dead prophet and by the sword make Islam the religion of the world. No sooner had the messengers returned than Saracen warriors began to flock to Medina for the conquest of Syria and the world.

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The Command. Before beginning the invasion of the Roman province of Syria in the year 632, Abu-Bekr thus addressed his generals: "This is to inform you that I intend to send an army of the faithful into Syria to deliver that country from the infidels, and I remind you that to fight for the true faith is to obey God. Treat your soldiers with kindness and consideration. Be just in all your dealings with them, and consult their feelings and opinions. Fight valiantly, and never turn your back upon the foe. When victorious, harm not the aged and protect women and children. Destroy not the palm tree or fruit trees of any kind. Waste not the corn fields with fire; nor kill any cattle except for food. Stand faithfully to every covenant and promise; respect all religious persons who live in hermitages or convents, and spare their edifaces. But should you meet with a class of unbelievers of a different kind, who go about with shaven crowns and belong to the synagogue of Satan, be sure you cleave their skulls unless they embrace the true faith or render tribute."—"History of the World," Ridpath, Vol. 4, p. 462.

Monks with Shaven Crowns. At the time of the Saracenic invasion of Syria there were thousands of recluses or hermits throughout the deserts who thought they were serving God by denying themselves even the comforts and often the necessities of life. These were divided into three classes called Hermits, Anchorites, and Monks. The last named caused most of the bitter religious controversies of the east. They shaved their heads so as to leave a circle of hair in the form of a crown as a reminder of the crown of thorns. Speaking of the worship of saints and relics Gibbon says of these monks: "The monks (a race of filthy animals, to whom Eunapious is tempted to refuse the name of men) are the authors of the new worship."—"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 2, p. 210. They were universally despised and certainly did not have the seal of God.

Historical Proof. "The Persian war ended in 628. Five years later the cloud of Saracenic invasion rolled northward from the Arabian desert."—"A Short History of the Near East", Davis, p. 32. This writer places the date in 633. The movement, however, had its beginning in the latter part of the previous year. "Syria was practically lost in 639 with the capture of Jerusalem by the Moslems. Egypt was invaded in 639, and Alexandria, the great stronghold of Grecio-Roman power succumbed later in 641."—Id. p. 33. Speaking of the rapidity of the conquest of Syria, Hogarth, in his "History of Arabia", p. 59, says: "So swift an Arab conquest of so great a province from the first potentate of the age has amazed posterity."

The Date Established. "The Golden Age of the Saracens was the twelve years, A.D. 632-644, comprised in the reigns of Abu-Bekr and Omar. This was a period of uninterrupted internal harmony and external conquest."—"History and Conquest of the Saracens", Freeman, p. 66. "In 632, the year of the Prophet's death, commenced the decisive invasion of both empires."-Id.p.81. The two empires mentioned are the Persion and Roman which had been weakened by the war between them which ended in 628.

Success of Saracens. **"Across the borders of the barren peninsula** lay two old and famous states, Persia and the Roman Empire. On these the Arab leaders, fanaticized by their faith, threw themselves with sudden and irresistable fervor. Persia, already exhausted by blood-letting, succumbed in a very few years leaving the whole territory in the hands of the victors. (641). Compared with Persia, the Roman Empire exhibited a far greater strength of resistance, but it was put to a terrible test by the vigor of the Arab assault. In 634 the Romans suffered a crushing defeat in Southern Syria."--"The History of the Balkan Peninsula", Ferdinand Schevill, p. 80.

The First Century. For 100 years the almost uninterrupted progress of the Saracens continued. After overrunning most of western Asia and all of northern Africa they crossed into Spain and all Europe trembled as they continued their victorious progress through Spain and into France. "Abu-Bekr, and Omar, between 632 and 641, conquered Syria, Palestine, Persia, and Egypt. By 709 the Saracens had extended their sway over northern Africa to beyond the Strait of Gibraltar. They then passed over into Spain (711), nearly the whole of which was subjugated. From Spain they poured into Gaul, where their progress was arrested by Charles Martel, near Poitiers in 732."--"New International Encyclopedia", Vol. 20, p. 464. **The gospel light was being eclipsed by the dark smoke from the Arabian desert and the locust horsemen were stinging and tormenting mankind.**

Crest of Movement. **The Saracen Empire reached its zenith at the** end of the first century. "At the end of the first century of the Hegira (722) the caliphs were the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe."--"Rise and Fall of the Saracen Empire", Gibbon, p. 113. The word Hegira means "flight". The flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina took place Friday, July 16, 622, and this marks the beginning of time with the Moslems. "Exactly a century had now elapsed since the death of Mohammed, and the Saracen rule reached from the Indus to the Pyrenees. No empire of antiquity had such an extent. Only Greek fire on the East and German valor on the West had prevented the Moslem power from girdling the Mediterranean."--"Barnes' General History", p. 339. The further progress of the Saracens was arrested by Charles Martel called "Martel the Hammer". The battle was fought near Tours and Poitiers in France and lasted seven days resulting in a Moslem defeat. This is reckoned as one of the decisive battled of history. Gibbon declared it to be a battle "which would change the face of the world."

Tormenting Continued. While the defeat at the battle of Tours ended the further progress of the Saracens they were by no means crushed, nor was their power broken. They continued to torment for another half century. "This victory (Tours) saved Western Europe from conquest by the Mohammedans, though they were still able to annoy, they were no longer dangerous."--"History of the Ancient World", Botsford, p. 553. "A bickering war went on year by year in Asia Minor in which neither Byzantium (Constantinople) nor Bagdad made any permanent gains, though once or twice the Moslems raided as far as the Bosphorus". --"Outline of History", Wells, p. 599. "The Saracens continually harrassed the frontiers of the Empire from Egypt to the Euphrates" --"New Americanized Encyclopedia Birtanica", Art. "Saracen".

Close of Period. By 759 the Saracens were driven south of the Pyrenees but they still carried on a "bickering" war to "annoy" and "harrass" the empire. The time period allotted to the Saracens for their tormenting ended in 782. It is said that on this date New Carthage was recaptured from the Saracens. While there may not be such outstanding events to mark the close of the period as marked its opening, it is certain that by 782 the tormenting had reached the stage where it was no longer dangerous. The Kaliphate rapidly lost its power and early in the ninth century completely surrounded to the Turkish guards. "Soon the civil and military administration were in their (Turk's) hands, and the Califs held the power of life and death by the grace of the Turks."--"Standard Encyclopedia", Art. "Calif". While the Caliphas retained their religious leadership for a while after 782, their civil and military authority was permanently lost. The exact date not essential. As with the scourge of literal locusts the five months is approximate.

A King Over Them. v. 11. A king is, "the chief magistrate or sovereign of a nation; a man vested with supreme authority over a nation, tribe or country; a monarch, usually inheriting his title and authority."-Webster. Mohammed assumed the state of a sovereign in 628 and is spoken of in history as "the uncrowned king of Arabia". Abu-Bekr is spoken of as "the first Calif of the Saracenic Empire". The first four Califs were elected, but beginning with the fifth the throne became hereditary, passing from father to son as with other monarchs. Gibbon in chapters 50 and 51 of his history repeatedly speaks of the calif as "prince", "monarch", and "king". Myers in his "General History" calls Mohammed a "legislator, judge and king", and in speaking of the califs in his "Medieval and General History", he says: "Their government was an absolute monarchy, such as has been the favorite form among Oriental peoples." Gibbon called the caliphs "the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe."

During Reign of Caliphs. Since the successors of Mohammed or the Caliphs were kings, and their reign as independent monarchs with power to hurt and torment began with Abu-Bekr in 632 and ended about 150 years later, there is added another proof that our deductions are correct regarding the time period of the fifth trumpet. Doubtless it is stated that these symbolic locusts "had a king over them" because literal locusts "have no king". Prov. 30;27. It is a mistake to claim that the Saracens had no kings and therefore the 150 year time period must begin with Othman in Turkish history. The Saracen Caliphs also met the prophetic designation of "A Destroyer". "Whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek Apollyon; in Latin Exterminians (that is, Destroyer')--Douay. "Apollyon (i.e. Satan)"-Strong's Bible Dictionary. Satan is the great destroyer. Isa. 14:12-17. The Califs as Satan's agents in propagating the false and desolating Moslem religion fully met the specifications of prophecy.

Memory Text: Rev. 9:3.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE √

36

The Sixth Trumpet. Rev. 9:12-14. "The first woe is past"-Weymouth. The first woe is past when the second woe begins. They are no more related than the first and second trumpets. Their time periods cannot be united for they represent the crest of two separate politican and military movements. The sixth trumpet or second woe is symbolic of the Ottoman Turks who overthrew the Eastern Roman Empire. The Saracens only "tormented"; the Turks were to "slay". While the Turks accepted the Moslem religion they were a different people and formed a different empire. The Saracens of course amalgamated with them.

The Golden Altar. The golden altar is where Christ ministers His blood. The horns received the blood that atoned for the sins of Israel. The failure of the church to recognize the service of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary brings the woe upon the professed Christian world. The heavenly sanctuary services had been trampled under foot by Papal Rome; therefore the Turks are loosed against them.

The Four Angels. v. 15. "At the great river Euphrates."-R.V. "Set at liberty the four angels who are prisoners near the great river Euphrates."-Wey. When the Saracenic empire declined it broke up into four divisions. "The unity of the Arabian Empire was dissolved, but the independent fragments were equal to populous and powerful kingdoms."-"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 4, p. 69. H. G. Wells in his "Outline of History", p. 634, gives a map showing just four of these fragments or kingdoms near the Euphrates. These four were the Sultanies of Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, and Bagdad. A voice from the golden altar told the sixth angel to liberate these four angels or agents for their work of slaughter.

The Ottoman Turks. The Turks originated from a small tribe living on the southern banks of the River Oxus in Scythia, now a part of Russia. The great Tatar migrations carried them south and west where they were joined by the Seljukes and fragments of other tribes and were organized into a nation by Othman and his son Orchan in the early part of the 14th century. From the name of Othman, its founder, the nation became known as the Ottoman Empire. The Turks now assumed the leadership over what remained of the Saracen empire. It was they who broke the bonds that had long held in check the Moslem powers and loosed them against Rome. The lofty Taurus mountains and the table lands of Armenia had made it possible for the Romans to hold back the Saracens. They broke through occasionally to "torment" but made no permanent conquests.

Powers of Islam Loosed. "The Seljuk Turks now swept down upon and conquered the Shiite rulers and upstarts and established themselves as the protectors of the Bagdad Calif, taking over the temporal powers of the Mayor of the palace. Very early they conquered Armenia from the Greeks, and then breaking the bonds that had restrained the powers of Islam for four centuries, they swept on to the conquest of Asia Minor,-almost to the gates of Constantinople. The mountain barriers that had held the Moslems so long had been turned by the conquest of Armenia from the north-east. The Turks utterly smashed the Byzantine army at the battle of Melasgird and established themserves at Iconium in Anatolia."--"Outline of History", Wells, p. 636.

Lasting Conquests. "Since the decline of the empire, the peninsula of Asia Minor had been exposed to the transient, though destructive inroads of the Persians and Saracens, but the fruits of lasting conquest were reserved for the Turkish Sultans.... Since the first conquests of the Califs the establishment of the Turks in Anatolia or Asia Minor was the first deplorable loss which the church and empire had sustained."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 4, pp. 169, 170. The Saracens had tormented by their temporary inroads and invasions but the Turks took permanent possession of the conquered territory.

Number of Horsemen. v. 16. "Twice 10,000 times 10,000"--R.V. "200,000,000."-Wey. The sixth trumpet introduced a gigantic struggle in which armies of cavalry aggregating 200,000,000 men were to engage, and in which a third of the population affected would be destroyed. The second woe cannot be confined to the activities of a single nation, but is rather a picture of the struggles of a period, during which all the nations of the old world were engaged. Several mighty movements out of Asia contributed also to the downfall of the Eastern Empire and the general slaughter, but in it all the Turks played the leading role.

Age of Cavalry. "Between the age of Charlemagne and that of the Crusaders a revolution had taken place in all the nations of Europe. The infantry service was degraded and the cavalry formed the strength of the armies."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 4, p. 191. The armies of Africa and Asia were composed of cavalry almost if not exclusively. In the tenth century the vast plains extending from China to the Danube were covered with shepherd peoples known by various names in history as Mongels, Moguls, Tartars, Turks, or Sytheans. This whole area became agitated by war, and tribes numbering millions began moving south and west. During the period of the sixth trumpet the Hungarians overran Germany and France, the Slavonians desolated northeastern Europe, and the Normans conquered England, Northern France, Cicily, and Southern Italy, and became the most renouned mounted troops of Europe. They attacked the Eastern Empire from the West at the same time the Turks were attacking it from the South and East.

Other Military Movements. The crusades began at the close of the 11th century and for 200 years Europe simply hurled itself against Western Asia, and history fails to tell how many millions were slain in those religious wars to deliver the holy land from Moslem rule. The sum total would be staggering. During the period of the second woe took place also the bloody campaigns of Zingis who conquered and desolated China as far south as Peking; of Octai and Baton who led immense armies of Moguls and

Tartars westward through Asia and into Europe, leaving death and desolation in their wake; and of the celebrated Timour who led millions of Moguls and Tartars out of central Asia and completely submerged India, Russia, Persia, Syria, and Egypt, crushing whole nations and sacking a thousand cities. A reading of the history of the wars of this period if enough to convince one that the prophet's picture of the number of horsemen and the slain is not overdrawn. The principal part in the bloody drama that completed the destruction of the Eastern Empire and filled the earth with ruin and death was enacted by the Turks. They captured Constantinople and made it the capital of a new empire destined to control the destinies of the nations for four centuries.

8/10

Uniforms and Weapons. v. 17-19. "The body-armour of the riders was red, blue and yellow."-Wey. These were the prominent colors in the Turkish uniforms. The prophet also saw the use of different weapons than those used by the Saracens. Fire, smoke and brimstone seemed to issue out of the horses mouths with deadly effect. The use of firearms in warfare appeared for the first time during these wars, the Turks being the first to use them. The use of heavy cannon was an important factor in the capture of Constantinople. Hand grenades and small firearms were also used. "The use of gunpowder in cannon and bombs appear as a familiar practice."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 4, p. 370. As the prophet saw the cavalrymen firing their pistols and carbines past the horses heads it looked as if the smoke and fire were issuing out of the horses mouths.

The Time Period. v. 15. This time period is noted for its detailed exactness. The sum of 360 days, 30 days, and one day, is 391 prophetic days or literal years. An hour is one twenty-fourth of a year or fifteen days. 391 years and 15 days was the time allotted for Turkish aggression and conquest as an independent power. We must not forget that the first woe is past when the second begins so that their time periods cannot be connected. They cover the crest of two separate movements.

Beginning of Period. Turkish history as an independent, conquering nation began with the capture of Brusa, Prusa, or Broussa, in the year 1326 A.D. The city was captured by Orchan and became the first capital of the Ottoman Empire with its captor as the first Sultan. "The annals of the 27 years of his (Othman's) reign would exhibit a repetition of the same inroads, and his heriditary troops were multiplied in each campaign by the accession of captives and volunteers. But it was not till Othman was oppressed by age and infirmatives that he received the welcome news of the conquest of Prusa, which had been surrendered by famine or treachery to the arms of his son Orchan. From the conquest of Prusa we may date the true era of the Ottoman Empire....The city by the labors of Orchan assumed the aspects of a Mohametan capital."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 4, pp. 379, 380. The seige was begun by Othman and lasted eight years. Brusa was the capital of Bithynia in North Asia Minor.

Further Evidence. "The conquest of Prusa or Brusa, by Orchan, the son of Othman, laid the foundation of the Ottoman Empire."--"History of Turkey", Clarke, p. 70. "Osman, or Orchan his son, emir of the Sultan of Iconium, whose followers were called Osmanlis founded the Ottoman Empire at Prusa, Bithynia, by policy and conquest."--"Heyden's Dictionary of Dates", Art. "Turkey". "1288-1326 Othman lays the foundation of the Turkish Empire of Asia Minor."--"Chronological Table of Universal History", Heilprin. Historians agree that Brusa was captured in the year 1326 and those who give the month place it in August, but the exact day is not given. We are told, however, by Von Hammer and others that Orchan brought the glad news of the fall of Brusa to his father just before his death. Though on his death bed, Othman was overjoyed with the tidings, and after requesting that he be buried in the captured city, he soon expired. After burying Othman in Brusa, Orchan proclaimed himself Sultan.

Approximate Date. "By the consent of all Turkish chronologers, Orchan, son and successor of Othman, took Brusa the metropolis of Bithynia, in the year of the Hegira 726, and was then sent for by his dying father. That same year, on the 10th of Ramazan, Othman dying, Orchan succeeded him to the throne...Now the 10th of Ramazan fell that year on the 8th of August."--"History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire.", Demetrius Cantemir, London, A Millar, 1756, 2v. in 1 pref. p. 5,6. If the city tell in August and Orchan had time to carry the news to his father Othman before his death which occurred on the 8th of August, the date of the fall must have been on or near the first day of the month. The exact date is found only by figuring back from the close of the period which is well established. "In the latter part of 1326 Prusa, or Broussa, surrendered to the sultan's son, Orkhan."--"Ottoman Dynasty", A. W. Hidden, Edition of 1912. "Just when and how Brusa fell cannot be stated with precision."--"Foundation of the Ottoman Empire", H. A. Gibbons, p. 47.

End of Period. The high tide of Turkish aggression and conquest was reached during the latter half of the 17th century when a large part of Europe was in their possession and all nations trembled before their conquering arms. From a human viewpoint nothing could prevent further success and probably the conquest of all Europe. "The barbarian hordes of the Turks...threaten all Christian lands. If God Himself does not bar their triumphant march, what nation, what kingdom, can shut them the gates of the west?"--The Pope at the Council of Clermont, (1095). But divine revelation had set a limit on Turkish dominion and the time was about to expire. In a succession of defeats between 1683 and 1717 the Ottoman hordes were turned back towards Asia in a retreat that is still in progress.

First Great Defeat. "Once more the tide of Moslem invasion rolled up to the gates of Vienna. Kara Mustapha...advanced with a vast army and laid siege to the Hapsburg capitol. For a moment the fate of central Europe hung in the balance, but after the siege had lasted two months, the chivalry of Poland, led by King Sobieski and a German army, came to the relief of the city, and on Sept. 12 (1683), the Turkish army was put to flight in a great battle before its walls. The blow was a crushing one and ended the role of Turkey as a formidable aggressive power. Austria, Poland and Venice now made a great onslaught upon the Ottoman Empire."-"New Americanized Encyclopedia", Vol.22, p 574. The Turkish army in the battle before Vienna numbered 275,000 men who were flushed with victory. Their defeat by less than 70,000 men was no less than miraculous. Sobieski became the hero of Christendom. Before the battle he addressed his soldiers thus: "Not Vienna alone, but Christendom looks to you today. Not for an earthly sovereign do you fight. You are soldiers of the King of Kings."

Beginning of End. "One thing is sure, that when they med their first really vigorous and well-organized Western foe under John Sobieski, their advance was checked; the tide of their victories at once began to ebb."--"The Balkans", William M. Shoane, p. 5.

"Vienna's siege of 1683 marks emphatically a turning point... From 1683 on our attention will be directed to the disintergration of the Ottoman Empire and to the distribution of its spoils among the Christian powers. The Christian aggression begam promptly on the morrow of the victory of Vienna...Austria, Poland, and Venice now began a war which marks the first phase in the long story of the Ottoman agony."--"History of the Balkan Peninsula", Schevill, pp. 259, 260. "The war which Austria, Poland, and Venice began in 1684 lasted till 1698, and revealed to an astonished world a decrepit Ottoman empire almost entirely shorn of the strength with which it had once imposed itself on Europe."--Id. p. 261.

Approaching Downfall. "Since Sobieski's great victory the power of the Turks has steadily waned rather than increased. They have been slowly pushed to the eastward until there is now little of value left to them in Europe but Constantinople."--"Famous Men of Modern Times", p. 222. "The great destruction of the Turks before Vienna was rapturously haled throughout Christendom as the announcement of the approaching downfall of the Mohometan Empire in Europe."--"History of the Ottoman Turks", Prof. Creasy, Vol. 2, p. 60. "The defeat and immense destruction of the Turks before Vienna was rapturously hailed throughout Christendom as presaging the approaching downfall of the Mohammedan Empire in Europe."--"Turkey Past and Present", p. 117. "The great battle before the walls of Vienna was only the "announcement" of the "approaching downfall" of Turkey and did not accomplish the downfall itself. After several other defeats the fatal blow was struck by Prince Eugene at the famous battle of Belgrade on August 16, 1717.

Battle of Belgrade. "The Cresent remained in the ascendancy until 1717, when the veteran Prince Eugene led an imperial army across the Danube and began a siege of Belgrade. The Sultan perceiving the peril of the situation, sent a tremendous army to break the investment. Eugene was pressed against the city by the foe without, but turned against his assailants, defeated them with prodigious slaughter, and compelled Belgrade to capitulate. This broke the power of the turks."--"History of the World", Ridpath, Vol. 6, pp. 522, 523, 546. Eugene had about 75,000 men and the Turks 200,000. The Austrains were hemmed in between the walls of the city and the vast army.

Turkish Power Broken. "Never was a bolder course attempted by a general, and never was there a more brilliant success. With greatly inferior force the Austrians stormed the Turkish lines. 20,000 of them were killed or wounded....The Turks retreated in disorder....This war with Austria which resulted in the treaty of Passarowitz did more than free Hungary from Ottoman rule. It accomplished the destruction of the prestige of the Turkish armies which has so long weighed on the mind of Europe. The Ottomans seem to have been completely cowed by the succession of defeats. Thenceforth they were always on the defensive and never willingly acted the part of aggressors. It became the settled conviction of Europe not only that there was no longer any reason to fear invasion from the Turks, but that it was only a question of time when they would be driven back into Asia."--"History of the Turkish Empire", Lord Eversly, pp. 199-202.

Results of Battle. "The result at length was the treaty signed at Karlowitz on the Danube. This pact marked the advent of a new era in the history of the Near East....From this time forth all serious dread of the military power of Turkey ceased in Europe. The prolonged but unhalted dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was in full prospect."--"A Short History of the Near East", Davis, p. 271. Miller, in "The Ottoman Empire", p. 1, calls this defeat "The first dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire", and in the "Tabular Views of Universal Knowledge" the battle of Belgrade is the last date given by the author, Putnam, under the caption, "The Ottoman Empire Broken".

Another Author. "The Austrian forces were led by Prince Eugene, now at the zenith of his fame and skill, and in two battles, of which one was fought at Peterwardein (Aug. 13,1716), and the other before the walls of Belgrade (Aug. 16,1717), his troops literally annihilated the opposing Turks. The defeat suffered by the Turks was even more decisive than in the earlier war and was duly registered in the peace that followed at Passarowitz."--

Precision of Prophecy. Thus the battle that sealed the doom of Turkey and ended her career as an independent and aggressive power was fought August 16, 1717. Counting back from this date 391 years and 15 days gives us August 1, 1326 as the date of the fall of Brusa and the founding of the Ottoman Empire. The amazing certainty and mathematical exactitude of this time prophecy should inspire confidence in the Scriptures and a greater love and admiration for its Divine Author. No human being could have possibly made such a prediction.

Memory Text: Rev. 9:15.

THE ANGEL WITH THE LITTLE BOOK

37

Parenthetical Prophecy. Revelation 10 is another parenthetical prophecy between the sixth and seventh trumpets just as was chapter 7 between the sixth and seventh seals. It is a break in the line of thought presented in chapters 8 and 9 and concluded in chapter 11. Its purpose is to give another picture of God's last message to the world before probation closes and His wrath is poured out in the seven last plagues. The seventh trumpet or third woe, is not mentioned till in Rev. 11:14,15. The 6th and 7th trumpets are the only ones of the seven that indicate a lapse of time between. The seventh angel is restrained from blowing his trumpet while the sealing message is doing its work during which time angels are holding back the winds of war. Rev. 7:1-3. The seventh trumpet cannot sound till the sealing work is completed.

The Mighty Angel. Rev. 10:1. The description of this message-angel is similar to that of Christ in chapter one. Christ is the Archangel and the Messenger of the Covenant as well as the spokesman of the Godhead and is thus the best symbol of a heaven-sent message. We are told that an angel is only "a symbol to represent the people of God who are working in harmony with the universe of heaven."--Leaflet Series, "The Church", Number Four. Six times in the book of Revelation an angel is used to represent a heaven-sent message. It is an appropriate symbol as the angels are God's messengers. The angel's face shined like the sun, the symbol of light and truth. When Jesus was transfigured "His face did shine as the sun."-Matt. 17:2. The message was one of heavenly light. The pillar of fire in the wilderness signified the presence of Israel's Divine Leader, so, the "feet as fillars of fire" doubtless indicate that Christ is the Leader of the Advent message and the source of its light.

The Rainbow. "And over his head was the rainbow."-Wey. This is another proof that the angel is Christ for the rainbow is the sign of Deity. See Eze. 1:28; Rev. 4:3. "In heaven the semblance of a rainbow encircles the throne, and overarches the head of Christ....The Saviour, interceding with the Father in his (man's) behalf, points to the bow in the clouds, to the rainbow around the throne and above His own head, as a token of the mercy of God toward the repentant sinner."--P.P. 107. It is a bow of promise and indicates that the message comes to earth in fulfillment of a divine promise. The message is a fulfillment of prophecy and is given when it is due. The covenant-keeping God "is not slack concerning His promise". The bow of promise represents Christ's righteousness which He pleads in the sinners behalf. Righteousness by faith, therefore, forms the basis of the heaven-sent message here symbolized.

Clothes with a Cloud. "Invested with a cloud".-E.D. Members of the Godhead must veil their glory when they appear to men. While leading ancient Israel through the wilderness Christ veiled His presence in the pillar of cloud. In a cloud He came down on Mount Sinai to proclaim His law, and in a cloud He visited the holy of holies in the tabernacle. "Who maketh the clouds

His chariot."-Ps. 104;3. As this is the only one of the angel messengers of Revelation described as clothed with a cloud some believe it indicates that something in regard to the message was covered or obscured from view and was not at first understood. There is no covering cloud in its final phase when unrestricted light and glory fills the earth. Rev. 18:1-5.

A World Message. v. 2-4. The symbol indicates complete possession of land and sea. The message covers land and sea or is world-embracing as are the other symbols of the same movement. See Rev. 7:1-3; 14:6-14; 18:1-5. The message is heralded with a loud voice because of its importance and because it must be heard by all. Christ is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah and He speaks His message with power. When His message is finished the seven thunders utter their voices. "Each of the seven peals of thunder uttered its own message."-Wey. This may be the same as the "thunderings and voices" proceeding from the throne as revealed in Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; and 16:17,18. If so it represents the close of probation.

Sealed Messages. "Keep secret what the seven peals of thunder said, and do not write it down."-20th C.N.T. There is no record of what the voices from the throne say, nor of what the seven thunders uttered in this prophecy. The prophet strictly obeyed the instruction and conjecture on our part would be in vain. Those things which are not revealed do not belong to us but to the Lord alone. Deut. 29:29. This may have been the same message Paul heard when he was carried to heaven in vision and heard words "which no human being is permitted to repeat."-2 Cor. 12:4, Wey. It may be these voices will be understood when the time comes for them to be uttered, at the close of probation. Till then we will confine our study to the things revealed.

The Little Book. "A little scroll opened."-E.D. "A small scroll unrolled."-Wey. The language indicates that the little book had not always been open. It has been closed or sealed. It was the message of this angel that opened and unsealed the little book whose contents were necessary to prepare the church for the terrible scenes of the third woe. Daniel was the only book of the Bible ever sealed and that only till a certain time. Dan. 12;4,9. At the time of the end many would search it through and proclaim from it a message. "Many shall be taught and knowledge shall be fulfilled.#-Theodotion. "And many shall inquire, and knowledge shall be increased."-Peshitta. The idea in more than 45 translations.

Unsealed by a Message. Daniel records the closing of his book till a certain time; the Revelator pictures the message that opens its prophecies to the world. "Daniel stood in his lot to bear his testimony which was sealed until the time of the end, when the first angel's message should be proclaimed to the world."-T.M. 115. "The prophecies present a succession of events leading down to the opening of the judgment. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But that part of his prophecy which related to the last days, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal 'to the time of the end'. Not till we reach this time could a message concerning the judgment be proclaimed, based on a fulfillment of these prophecies. But at the time of the end, says the prophet, 'many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.'"--G.C.356. Therefore the message that climaxed at the close of the 2300 years or in 1844 opened or unsealed the book of Daniel and marks the beginning of the time of the end and the last generation.

The Message. v.5-7. "Lifted up his right hand to heaven."-R.V. The message is given by the authority of the Creator and is based on the fact of creation. The recognition of the Creator and the power of creation is an important part of all of God's messages to man. The power to create is always coupled with the power to save or recreate. See Rev. 14:6-7. The message from the opened book of Daniel was regarding time. It is based on the greatest time prophecy in the Bible recorded in Daniel 8: 13-19; 9:24-27. In Dan. 7:9,10 the same event is called the judgment. Before the mathematical exactness and clock-like precision of the 2300 year prophecy and its fulfillment skeptics stand silenced. It points out the very year of Christ's baptism, His crucifixion, the time the gospel went to the Gentiles, the time of the end, and the beginning of the Investigative Judgment.

Jews Forbidden to Study. "In 1656, a dispute occurred in Poland between some distinguished Jewish Rabbins and the Catholics, respecting the 70 weeks. The Rabbins were so hard pushed by the argument, that proved Jesus to be the Messiah, the time of His sufferings being at the end of the seventy weeks, that they broke up the discussion. The Rabbins then held a meeting and pronounced a curse upon any Jew who should attempt to ascertain the chronology of the prophetic period. Their anathema was this: 'May his bones and his memory rot who shall attempt to number the 70 weeks.'"--"The Midnight Cry", August 10, 1843.

Last Day Message. v.6,7. "He solemnly declared, 'There shall be no further delay; but in the days when the seventh angel blows his trumpet--when he begins to do so--then the secret purposes of God are realized, in accordance with the good news which He gave to His servants the Prophets."-Wey. The purposes of God in the plan of salvation are realized when the seventh angel blows his war trumpet. "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets."-R.V. "When he is ready to blow his blast."-20th C.N.T. The "mystery of God" isthe gospel. 1 Tim. 3:16; Col. 1:27. The gospel work is finished before the seventh trumpet sounds. The four angels holding in check the winds of war do not permit the Armageddon war-trumpet to sound till the servants of God are all sealed for the kingdom. The message of Rev. 10, therefore, reaches to the close of probation and then and not before will the last and most terrible war trumpet sound to gather the nations to Armageddon. This is indicated in Rev. 11:14,15.

"Delay No longer." - R.V. "No further delay"-Wey. The language indicates that there had been a long delay in the finishing of the mystery of God or the gospel work. This delay was caused by the "falling away"which brought on the Dark Ages. 2 Thes. 2:2,3. The study of the prophecies especially those of Daniel convinced the church that the coming of Christ was near at hand. The study of the 2300 year prophecy especially convinced Bible students that the end of all things was at hand.

The Time Set. "That there should be time no longer", indicates the setting of a definite time when probation would close and Christ return. The great foreign missions movement which began with William Carey in the closing years of the 18th century, culminated in the Advent Movement early in the 19th century. Beginning about 1818 devout men all over the world began to study prophecies especially of Daniel and concluded that Christ would soon return. The leader of this movement in America was William Miller, a Baptist, Others associated with him were Josiah Litch, Charles Fitch, Joshua V. Himes, and many others, Charles Irving and Joseph Wolfe were two of the outstanding leaders in the Old World. More than 300 ministers of the Church of England and 3000 of all denominations began to preach that Christ would return at the end of the 2300 days or in the fall of 1844.

The Mistake. Gabriel had declared to Daniel that at the end of the 2300 years, "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." The church leaders then knew nothing of a heavely sanctuary and if so could not conceive that anything in heaven needed cleansing. They did not then know that the Papal abomination with its false meditorial system had polluted the heavenly sanctuary and its services by a counterfeit. Also that the heavenly sanctuary contains books of record that need cleansing by an investigative judgment before Christ could return. The only thing in the universe that they knew of that needed cleansing was this sin-cursed earth which is to be cleansed by fire. Their conclusion was that Christ would return in 1844 and cleanse the earth by fire. The message was given with power and brought the greatest revival since Pentecost.

The Disappointment. When the time passed and Christ did not return the advent believers experienced a disappointment akin to that of the disciples when Christ was crucified and their hopes were blasted. But this very disappointment is foretold in this prophecy and was later discovered and proved a great source of encouragement. Rev. 10:8-10. The study of the book of Daniel with its message that Christ would soon come brought great joy to believers who awaited translation into the heavenly kingdom, but when the time passed the joy was turned into bitterness. Eating a book means to study and understand it. Eze, 2:9-3:1. While the disappointment was bitter the mistake led to the discovery of one of the greatest truths that was covered up during the Dark Ages.

Memory Text: Rev. 10:7.

MEASURING THE TEMPLE OF GOD

38

A Great Discovery. The mistake in the interpretation of the 2300 year time-prophecy resulted in the unsealing of the book of Daniel. The disappointment of 1844 also led to the discovery of one of the greatest and most vital truths of the plan of redemption; one that had been hidden under the rubbish of papal superstition since near apostolic days. The Lord purposely covered up the true meaning of this great time prophecy in order to more effectually call the world's attention to it and the time when it would end. Because of the power of God attending the proclamation of the message throughout the world its divine origin could not be questioned.

Testimony of Witness. "Of all the great religious movements since the days of the apostles, none have been more free from human imperfections and the wiles of Satan than was that of the autumn of 1844. Even now, after the lapse of many years, all who shared in that movement and who have stood firm upon the platform of truth, still feel the holy influence of that blessed work, and bear witness that it was of God....The work did not stand in the wisdom and learning of men, but in the power of God...There went with it an impelling power that moved the soul. There was no doubt, no questioning....Like showers of rain upon the thirsty earth, the Spirit of grace descended upon the earnest seekers."--G.C. 401, 402.

Blessing in Disguise. The bitter disappointment that came to the apostles was a blessing in disguise. It was the most effectual method of erasing from their clouded minds a false idea, and preparing them to receive the floods of pentecostal light. To Christ's true followers disappointments are His appointments. This is especially true of the 1844 experience. As soon as the time passed and Christ did not return, the world began to scoff and has scoffed ever since. But all such are still in darkness regarding one of the grandest truths of the gospel. The heavenly Sanctuary, with its High Priest, and its services, are largely hidden from them. The sweet tidings of Christ's return was turned to bitterness by the disappointment, but the bitter became sweet again because of the glorious discovery made. The discovered light became the basis of another world message.

A New Commission. Rev. 10:11. "You must prophecy yet further."-Wey. To the disappointed church, chagrined by apparent failure and puzzled as to the cause of their disappointment and mistake, another commission was given. The previous world message had accomplished its purpose but was not final. It had unlocked the sealed book and brought to light the hidden truth that is necessary to prepare a people to stand in the final judgment, and through the day of God's indignation. The discovered light must now be heralded to the world in another message. The heavenly commission indicates that the previous message was incomplete and must again be given to all the world with the additional light that removed the obscuring cloud and corrected the mistake.

Key to Discovery. Rev. 11:1. "Then a reed was given me to serve as a measuring rod; and a voice said, 'Rise, and measure God's Sanctuary--and the altar--and count the worshippers who are in it."-Wey. The command to "rise" indicates that the church was cast down with discouragement; that active missionary service had ceased because the church thought their work done. The mistake made was in regard to the meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary. The command is to rise and measure the sanctuary and its furniture and its services so as to discover the cause of the mistake. "Measure" means to study, investigate, or critically examine.

The Measuring Rod. Measure:-"Any standard of comparison or judgment." The only standard of comparison by which the heavenly sanctuary and its services can be judged is the Mosaic sanctuary and its services. They were typical of the heavenly and Moses was cautioned to carefully follow the pattern shown him in the mount. Ex. 25:8,9,40. The earthly was a miniature picture of the heavenly and is the measuring rod by which the heavenly can be measured or studied. The study of a type gives us knowledge regarding the antitype. Most of our knowledge of the heavenly sanctuary and its services has been gained through the study of the typical.

"Count the Worshipers". The commission was to also study or count those who serve in the sanctuary, for all was typical. The high priest had many assistants. According to 1 Chron. 23 and 24 there were 24,000 priests serving in 24 courses. Over each course was a prince or elder. Thus in the heavenly service there are 24 elders as leaders in the priestly ministration. See Rev. 4, 5. Each year in the typical service the whole plan of redemption was pictured, covering the entire meditorial work of Christ in the sanctuary in heaven. Thus once each year between the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles the whole gospel plan was typified. See Heb. 8:1-5; 9:1-12, 24.

The Court. v. 2. "But as for the court which is outside the Sanctuary, pass it over. Do not measure it; for it has been given to the Gentiles, and for forty-two months they will trample the holy city under foot."-Wey. "Will be under their heel forty-two months."-20th C.N.T.; Moffatt. The court was to be passed over in the measuring because it was outside the sanctuary proper and for 42 months, 1260 prophetic days or literal years, it would be in complete control of the wicked. During this period the "holy city" or church would be under the heel of an apostate power. See Dan. 7:25,26; 8:10-14; Rev. 13:5-7; 2 Thes. 2:3,4. This proves that the court of the heavenly sanctuary is in the earth and not in heaven. A study of the sanctuary question revealed to the disappointed church that there is a sanctuary in heaven. See Ps. 102:19; Rev.11:19.

No Sanctuary on Earth. "After the settlement of the Hebrews in Canaan, the tabernacle was replaced by the temple of Solomon, which though a permanent structure and upon a larger scale, observed the same proportions, and was similarly furnished.

In this form the sanctuary existed--except while it lay in ruins in Daniel's time--until its destruction by the Romans, in A. D. 70. This is the only sanctuary that ever existed on the earth, of which the Bible gives any information."--G.C.412. Since this is true, Pagan Rome could not have been the sanctuary polluted by the Papacy as some contend. The disappointed church learned that the sanctuary to be cleansed at the close of the 2300 years was in heaven and that only the court is on earth. The cleansing must eventually include the court where the sins were committed and the counterfeit papal system supplanted the heavenly for 42 months.

Entire Sanctuary Holy. The word "sanctuary" is from the Latin "sanctus" meaning "sacred", or "sanctuarium", meaning "a sacred place." The entire sanctuary included all three compartments and all were holy or sacred. The most sacred of all was the inner apartment into which the high priest alone could enter and then but once a year. It was therefore called "the most holy" or "the holy of holies." The other enclosure of the tabernacle proper was next in sacredness and was known as "the holy place." Only priests could enter and minister in this place. The court was a part of the sanctuary but was less holy than the other enclosures. Into it the people of Israel could enter and meet the priests at the altar of sacrifice. Solomon's temple that replaced the tent tabernacle had a number of courts with varying degrees of sacredness. These were all considered a part of the temple and were holy. See Acts 21:26-28. Both sanctuaries were built under divine direction. "It was Christ who planned the arrangement for the first earthly tabernacle. He gave every specification in regard to the building of Solomon's temple."--C.O.L. 349. See 1 Chron. 28: 11-19.

Service of Court. The court was the most sacred place on earth which God's people could enter. There was located the altar where the convicted sinner met the priest, confessed his sins, offered his substitutionary sacrifice, and by faith received the forgiveness for his transgressions. From the altar, the priest, as the sinner's mediator and representative, carried the blood into the holy place to minister it in the sinner's behalf. The court was the place where the atonement was made effectual and the privileges of the plan of redemption enjoyed. The people came out of the camp and of the world and into the court to meet with and worship God. Therefore, the world as a whole cannot be the court of the heavenly sanctuary for it is not in any sense a sacred place.

Heavenly Temple Court. The church of God is the most sacred place on earth and is therefore the court of the heavenly temple or sanctuary. This is very evident from Rev. 11:2,3. The court is here declared to be "the holy city" which the Gentiles were to trample under foot for 42 months, during which time God's two witnesses must do their testifying clothes in sackcloth. Because the church is the only part of the heavenly temple that is on earth it is called "the temple of God" in which He dwells through His Spirit. See Eph. 2:19-22. "The church" is designated "the Lord's sanctuary" in Vol. 5:211.

Polluted by Papacy. The church is the part of God's temple or sanctuary that "the man of sin" entered and controlled soon after apostolic days in fulfillment of 2 Thes. 2:3-7. He received worship "as God" especially for 42 months or 1260 days during which time he trampled under foot the court or "holy city." This is in harmony also with Dan. 7:25 forecasting the time when "the saints of the Most High", which constituted the church, were to be given into the hands of the papal power for 1260 years. In Dan. 8:10-13 we are told that during this same period the papacy "Cast down some of the host" (saints) "to the ground, and stamped upon them, and by him...the place of His (God's) sanctuary was cast down." The statement is made that this "transgression of desolation" would "give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot." In Dan. 11:31 the prophecy declares that the papacy would "polute the sanctuary of strength." Surely this is the same trampling "under foot" of the "holy city" described in Rev. 11:2. The Gentiles, or the wicked, have ruled the world or had it under foot through all the ages of the reign of sin. This could not possibly be confined to 42 months.

Further Evidence. In the typical service one sacrifice each year was offered "without the camp" to indicate that Christ would die for the whole world and that the Gentiles could obtain salvation by entering His temple or court. See Num. 19:1-10. "The sacrificial heifer was conducted without the camp, and slain in the most imposing manner. Thus Christ suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for Calvary was outside the city walls. This was to show that Christ did not die for the Hebrews alone, but for all mankind."--Vol. 4:121. Jerusalem was symbolic of the church or court and to pay the redemption price for the whole world Jesus "suffered without the gate". The high priest and his assistants had to pass judgment upon every sacrificial victim before it could be offered and this took place in the court even with the "red heifer" that was sacrificed "without the camp" or court. So likewise these same priests pronounced Jesus worthy of death within Jerusalem and then led Him "without the gate" to die on the altar of Calvary.

Church Called Court, Ps. 65:4; 84:1,2; 92:13; 96:8; 100:4; 116:19; 135:2; Isa. 1:12; Zech. 3:7. The plural is used in all these texts doubtless because Solomon's temple had several courts which represented the church as a whole. "Christ is spoken of as walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Thus is symbolized His relation to the churches....He is the high priest and mediator in the sanctuary above, yet He is represented as walking up and down in the midst of His churches on earth....He is the true watchman of the Lord's house, the true warden of the temple courts."--A.A.586. It was in the court or courts of the typical temple that the people by faith received the benefits of the plan of redemption. It is in the church of Christ on earth that His people today receive the blessings of His grace. The repentant sinner comes out of the world and into the church or court of the heavenly temple to get the benefits of Calvary and the plan of redemption.

The Sanctuary Services. The typical service in behalf of sinners was threefold and took place in the three enclosures of the sanctuary in the following order. (1) In the court where the sinner brought the sacrifice and met the priest at the altar. There could be no atonement for his sins or any priestly service in his behalf till the substitutionary lamb was slain. (2) In the holy place where the sinner could not go except through his representative and mediator, the priest. There could be no service in the first apartment till after the victim had been slain in the court for "without shedding of blood is no remission." Heb. 9:22. The services in these two places were known as the "daily ministration" because they continued daily throughout the year. See p.p. 352,354. (3) In the holy of holies where the high priest went once a year to cleanse the sanctuary. This was not a daily but a yearly service. This divine order could not be altered and the service begin in either the holy or most holy place. It must begin in the court.

In the Antitype. The same order must be observed in the antitypical service of Christ. Since He was to be both the victim and the priest He must come to earth and be condemned in the court and die "without the gate" on the altar of Calvary so that His blood could be ministered for the repentant sinners who come into the court and confess. Jesus cannot minister without His blood. See Heb. 9:12-24. The priestly service of Christ began in the court as did the typical. Jesus as our priest and mediator or representative entered upon the second phase of His priestly ministration in the heavenly sanctuary on the day of Pentecost. His continual or daily ministration continued till the close of the 2300 years when He began the final phase of His work, that of cleansing the temple of its record of sin and its court of the papal abominations that had so long polluted it with its false mediatorial system. The cleansing must include the final cleansing of the church, the earthly part of the temple of God. The purifying of the church or court will be simultaneous to and an important part of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. To claim that Jesus ministered in the holy place before He came to earth to shed His blood and minister in the court and then ascended to begin in the holy of holies, is unscriptural and contrary to the divine order.

Three Typical Events. Also there were three great events or festivals in the typical service which came in exact order and were symbolic of similar events in the heavenly service. (1) The typical service of the year began with the Passover when the offering of the paschal lamb ushered in the daily or continual service of the year. (2) Fifty days later came Pentecost which was a thanksgiving celebration of the ingathering of the early harvest and probably the memorial of the giving of the law. (3) On the last day of the typical service for sin came the day of Atonement which completed the ministration that pictured to Israel the whole plan of redemption. The feast of Tabernacles was a celebration of the blotting out of sins on the day of Atonement and also of the ingathering of the harvest.

The Antitype. The Passover was typical of Calvary when the true paschal Lamb was slain and Christ began His priestly service. Pentecost met its antitype in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to "convince of sin", the transgression of the law; "of righteousness", obedience to the law; and "of judgment", when the world will be measured by the law. Then in the type there was a long period before the final event, the day of Atonement or Judgment. So in the antitype there ia a long period between Pentecost and the solemn work of investigative judgment which began at the close of the 2300 years in 1844, and will end with the close of probation. These events must also follow the order of the typical.

Two Groups of Events. The typical events were in two groups at the beginning and close of the typical yearly service. They also came in connection with the spring and fall harvests of Palestine which were typical of the two great gospel harvests at the beginning and close of Christ's ministry. Between the two groups of events and the two harvests was a long period of drought with but little fruitage. The most important events in Christ's ministry also come in two groups at the beginning and close of His ministration. After the Pentecostal outpouring and its attendant harvest of souls there came a "falling away" which was the beginning of a long spiritual drought when there was but little gospel fruitage. Just before the close of probation there will be another great gospel harvest produced by the "latter rain" or final outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It was this great sanctuary truth that the church of the 1844 disappointment was commissioned to give to the world.

Memory Text: Rev. 11:1.

THE TWO WITNESSES

39

Restricted Light. Rev. 11:2,3. "For those 1260 days they will continue teaching, clothed in sackcloth."--20th C.N.T. During the long, dark period of the middle ages when papal Rome ruled the world and persecuted the church, the work of the gospel was greatly restricted; the Sun of Righteousness was eclipsed by a dark cloud of pagan dogmas and papal superstitions. "The noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world."--Wylie. During the first three centuries of the Christian era the church was indeed "the light of the world", and under the early rain the gospel light blazed out with unrestricted power and glory. Then came the "falling away" when the "mystery of iniquity" entered the temple of God and the church went into an eclipse.

Clothed in Sackcloth. Sackcloth was a coarse black cloth worn by prophets to depict the solemnity of their messages. It was also an emblem of distress and mourning. In Rev. 6:12 it is used as a symbol of the obscuration of light: "And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair." During the 1260 years of papal supremacy, the church, which should have been the light of the world, was compelled to flee to the wilderness and hide in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. See Rev. 12: 6,14. Also during this period the Scriptures were proscribed and a cloud of pagan superstitions spread over the church like a cloak of sackcloth obscuring its light.

Historian's Picture. "The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christians was gradually corrupted; and the monarchy of heaven, already clouded by metaphysical subtleties, was degraded by the introduction of a popular mythology, which tended to restore the reign of polytheism....The Christians of the seventh century had insensibly relapsed into a semblance of paganism; their public vows were addressed to the relics and images that disgraced the temples of the East; the throne of the Almighty was darkened by a cloud of martyrs, and saints, and angels, the objects of popular veneration."--"Gibbon's Roman Empire", Vol. 4, chap. 49. During this period the church was not "clothed with the sun" as pictured in Rev. 12:1. The "holy city" was "cast down to the ground and stamped upon" by the same power that "cast down the truth to the ground." See Dan. 8:10-13.

The Two Witnesses. v. 4. "These men are represented by the two olive trees."--20th C.N.T. The Two Witnesses are said to be "standing before the God of the earth." The two symbolic candlesticks and olive trees referred to here are explained in Zech.4. Here the olive trees are also called "the two anointed ones" or "sons of oil" (margin), "that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." There can be no question but the candlesticks and olive trees described in Zechariah are the ones referred to in Rev. 11:4. The golden oil flows out of the two olive trees through golden pipes into the golden bowls of the seven lamps and thus their lights are kept continually burning.

Symbols Explained. The seven-branched candlestick or seven lamps of gold are divinely explained to be the church of Christ in all its branches or divisions. Rev. 1:12,13,20. Seven is the divine symbol of fulness and completeness. "When the anointed ones empty themselves through the golden pipes, the golden oil flows out of themselves into the golden bowls, to flow forth into the lamps, the churches."--T.M. 337. "The mission of the two anointed ones is to communicate light and power to God's people....Thus it is that the holy lamps are fed, and the church becomes the light-bearer in the world....From the two olive trees the golden oil flowing through the golden pipes has been communicated to us."--Id. pp. 510, 511.

Angel's Explanation. When the Prophet Zechariah acknowledged that he did not understand the meaning of the symbolic candlesticks and olive trees, the angel gave a partial explanation which must be further explained by other Scriptures. What He did say related to the work of the Holy Spirit. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." The angel further said that "those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." Zech. 4:6,10. In Rev. 5:6, the "seven eyes" of Christ are said to be "the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." They symbolize the Holy Spirit in the perfection of His power and service.

Other Scriptures. The Bible is its own interpreter and we must refer to other Scriptures to identify the Two Witnesses who furnish the oil that makes the church the light of the world. Primarily "the Lord of the whole earth" must represent the Father and the two that "stand by" Him and witness for Him are Christ and the Holy Spirit, the second and third Persons of the Godhead. See 1 John 5:6,7. "Give testimony".-Weymouth. While the Lord has many witnesses, Christ and the Holy Spirit have been the two principal ones in this earth since its creation. Christ is the great Witness before His Father in behalf of His people, and the Holy Spirit is the great Witness who testifies for the Godhead on earth or before man. See also Rev. 1:4,5.

Christ a Witness. Christ was given to the world by the Father as " a witness to the people". Isa. 55:4. Jesus told Pilate that He came into the world "to bear witness to the truth." John 18:37. In Rev. 1:5 Jesus is called "the faithful Witness". "The truthful Witness,"-Wey. In Rev. 3:14 He is called "the faithful and true Witness," "The true and faithful Witness."--Wey. In scores of places in the Spirit of Prophecy Jesus is called "The True Witness", "The Faithful Witness" etc., especially in reference to the Laodicean Message. Jesus often declared that He came from above to bear witness or give testimony. See John 3:31-35. He is the Father's chief Witness in the world.

Also the Holy Spirit. Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit as the other witness~~. See John 3~~:6,11. "We" and "our" can refer to none other than the Speaker and the Spirit whom He had just mentioned as the instrument of the new birth. Jesus also spoke of the Holy

Spirit as "another Comforter", "advocate", "teacher", etc. See John 14:16,26; 16:7-13. In Acts 5:32 the Holy Spirit is said to be a witness, and in Heb. 10:14,15 after describing Christ and His work the writer says: "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness for us."

Spirit of Prophecy. "The Holy Spirit comes to the world as Christ's representative. It not only speaks the truth, but it is the truth--the faithful and true Witness. It is the great Searcher of hearts, and is acquainted with the characters of all."--C.T. 68. "In the council, assembled to plan the death of Christ, the Witness was present who heard the boastful words of Nebuchadnezzar, who witnessed the idolatrous feast of Belshazzar, who was present when Christ in Nazareth announced Himself the Anointed One. This Witness was now impressing the rulers with the work they were doing. Events in the life of Christ rose up before them with a distinctness that alarmed them....In their true significance the Old Testament Scriptures regarding Christ flashed before their minds....Under the impression of the Holy Spirit, the priests and rulers could not banish the conviction that they were fighting against God." --D.A. 539.

Many Other Witnesses. The Two Witnesses do their testifying through many other witnesses. Every Scripture is a witness and there are thousands of them. John 5:39. The prophets are also said to be witnesses. Acts. 10:43. All of God's people have been and are witnesses. Isa. 43:10,12; 44:8; Acts 1:8. There have been millions of these personal witnesses. Every conscience also testifies for God. Rom. 2:15,16. The heavenly bodies and every created thing bear testimony to the wisdom, power, and love of the Creator. Psalms 19:1-3; Rom. 1:19-21. Yet all these millions of witnesses can testify only as the Two Witnesses, Christ and the Holy Spirit, speak through them. Without their presence the testimony of a Christian is powerless, nature has no message, and the Bible is a dead book. We can witness for the truth only "in Christ", and our consciences bear testimony only "in the Holy Ghost". Rom. 9:1.

The Two Testaments. Primasius, Bede, Bishop Andrews, Melchoir, Affelman, Croly, Wordsworth, Uriah Smith, and others declared that the Two Witnesses are the two Testaments preached by the Christian church. The same position is taken in the book "Great Controversy", p. 267; "The Two Witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament." In the light of many Scriptures and other statements in the Spirit of Prophecy, the Old and New Testaments can be the Two Witnesses only in a secondary sense. The Two Testaments are the Two Witnesses only in the sense that they are their written testimony. A witness and his testimony are inseparable. When a written testimony is read in court it is reckoned as if the writer were speaking or bearing testimony in person. Since Christ and the Holy Spirit speak or testify through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments it is not untrue to speak of the two Testaments as the Witnesses themselves.

Their Written Testimony. The Two Testaments constitute the two Volumes of the written testimony of the Two Witnesses. In 2 Tim. 1:8 the Scriptures are called "the testimony of our Lord". According to 1 Cor. 2:1-4 the "testimony of God" in order to be effectual must be given through Jesus Christ and "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." The Scriptures and the writings of all prophets are declared to be "the testimony of Jesus". See Rev. 1:9; 6:9; 12:17; 19:10. This expression includes the writings of any true prophet at any time. The seven letters to the seven churches are dictated by Christ but at the close of each is the statement: "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." These letters are the testimony of the Two Witnesses and the same can be said of the entire Bible.

Spoke Through Prophets. It was Christ who spoke through all the prophets. See 1 Peter 1:10,11. "It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. The Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy."--P.P. 367. "The word of God spoken by Christ in the Old and New Testaments is the bread from heaven."--Vol. 6:132. But the chief instrument of Christ in this communication is the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21. For this reason the Two Witnesses are also called "the two prophets". See Rev. 11:10. Christ was the Prophet of all prophets. See Deut. 18:15-18; Matt. 13:54-58; Acts.3:19-23. The Holy Spirit is also a prophet. See John 16:13; Acts 20:23; 21:11. Christ and the Holy Spirit are the two anointed ones, the two sons of oil, the two Comforters, the two Advocates, the two Teachers, and the two Prophets, the two Witnesses.

The Testimonies. The writings of the Spirit of Prophecy are called "The Testimonies to the Church". Whose testimonies to the church? "The testimonies He (God) has given."--Vol.5:719. "The Voice of the True Witness".--Id. p. 720. "Testimonies of Jesus", is an expression often used. They are also called the "testimonies of the Spirit of God."--Vol. 4:514; Vol. 5:217. "Dictates of the Spirit of God."--Vol. 4:14. "The testimony of His Spirit."--Id. p. 148; Vol. 5:674. Like the Bible, the writings of God's modern prophet, constitute the latest written testimony of the Two Witnesses, and the Two Prophets, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Further Evidence. There are many comments in the "Testimonies to the Church", on the two olive trees and two witnesses, and all of them identify them as personal beings and never as the two Testaments except the one referred to in "Great Controversy". Note the following: "All have a lamp, and that lamp filled with the golden oil emptied from the *heavenly witnesses that stand before the throne of God*, will shed the most precious, strong, pure, clear rays of light on the sinner's pathway."--Manuscript, "Group D", p. 16. "Those who present the eternal principles of truth need the holy oil emptied from the two olive branches into the heart....Then the *Lord Jesus* by *His Spirit* will supply the force and power. That is His work."--Vol. 6:123. "The inner lamp must be supplied with the oil that flows from the *messengers of heaven* through the golden tubes into the golden bowl. The Lord's communication never comes to man in vain."--Vol. 7:249.

The Holy Ones. "From the two olive trees the golden oil was emptied through the golden pipes into the bowl of the candlestick, and thence into the golden lamps that gave light to the sanctuary. So from the holy ones that stand in God's presence His Spirit is imparted to the human instrumentalities who are consecrated to His service. The mission of the two anointed ones is to communicate to God's people the heavenly grace which alone can make His word a lamp to the feet and a light to the path. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.'"--C.O.L.408. The Word or Scriptures is here said to be the light held aloft by the candlesticks or churches. See Psalms 119:105; Prov. 6:23.

The Anointed Ones. God's people are to be channels for the outworking of the highest influence in the universe. In Zechariah's vision the two olive trees which stand before God are represented as emptying the golden oil out of themselves through golden tubes into the bowl of the Sanctuary... So from the anointed ones that stand in God's presence the fulness of divine light and love and power is imparted to His people, that they may impart to others light and joy and refreshing. They are to become channels through which divine instrumentalities communicate to the world the tide of God's love."--Vol. 6:11,12. See also P.K. 594.

Always Personalities. "Let the preacher be full of the word of the Lord. Let every man who enters the pulpit know that he has angels from heaven in his audience. And when these angels empty from themselves the golden oil of truth into the heart of him who is teaching the word, then the application of the truth will be a solemn, serious matter. The angel messengers will expell sin from the heart, unless the door of the heart is padlocked and Christ is refused admission. Christ will withdraw Himself from those who persist in refusing the heavenly blessings that are so freely offered them. The Holy Spirit is doing its work on the hearts....A man may lavish all the treasures of his learning, he may exhaust the moral energies of his nature, and yet accomplish nothing, because he himself has not received the golden oil from the heavenly messengers; therefore it can not flow forth from him, imparting spiritual life to the needy."--T.M. 338. "So from the holy ones that stand in God's presence, His Spirit is imparted to human instrumentalities that are consecrated to His service."--Id. p. 510.

The Retribution. Rev. 11:5. War against the saints, the Scriptures or any of God's witnesses, is war against Christ and the Holy Spirit. Jesus said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." We are told that "Christ is persecuted in the person of His saints". The same is true in the destruction of the written testimony of the Two Witnesses. During the Dark Ages millions of martyrs were burned at the stake and the Scriptures were consigned to the flames. By the same weapon will vengeance be visited upon the enemies of the Two Witnesses.

The papal weapons of persecution were the sword, flame, captivity, and apoil. Dan. 11:33. These weapons will be turned upon their own heads. The sword of Armageddon and the fires of perdition will kill all the enemies of the Two Witnesses.

Examples of Their Power. v. 6. It was during the great apostasy of Israel under the reign of Ahab and Jezebel that the Two Witnesses through their witness Elijah closed the heavens against rain for three and a half years. This could not have been done by the Old and New Testaments for the New was not in existance and only a portion of the Old. The Two Witnesses turned the waters of Egypt to blood and smote the inhabitants with ten plagues. The only part of the Scriptures then in existance were the books of Genesis and Job. By the power of the Two Witnesses the seven last plagues will be poured out on the rebel world that rejects their testimony.

Sackcloth Removed. The prediction that the Two Witnesses would testify for 1260 years clothed in sackcloth indicates that at the close of that period the blanket would be removed and that the church would again be robed in the light of Christ's righteousness and be "the light of the world." The church is again to be brought back to the faith and practice of the apostles, and the Scriptures freed from the semi-pagan superstitions that so long clouded their meaning. The whole earth is to be lightened with the power and glory of God in a final world message heralding the unrestricted testimony of the Two Witnesses. See Rev. 14:6-14; 18:1-5.

War With the Beast. Interpreting the Two Witnesses as primarily representing Christ and the Holy Spirit, and secondarily the two Testaments because it constitutes their written testimony, does not in any way effect the interpretation of verses 7-13, as given in "Great Controversy", and in "Daniel and the Revelation" by Uriah Smith. The final war of the beast against the saints and the Scriptures will be a war against Christ and the Holy Spirit, the two great Witnesses for the Father who work together to make the plan of redemption a success.

Memory Text: Rev. 11:3.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

40

The Third Woe. Rev. 11:14. "Soon to follow"-20th C.N.T. "The third woe will soon be here"-Wey. The language indicates a brief space between the sixth and seventh trumpets during which time the parenthetical prophecy meets its fulfillment. The message of the mighty angel unseals and explains the prophecies and time periods of the book of Daniel; it measures the heavenly sanctuary and its services and gives its glorious message to the world; it also pictures the finishing of the gospel commission during the unrestricted testimony of the Two Witnesses which lightens the whole earth with glory. This must all take place before the seventh trumpet can sound.

Wars of Period. Each trumpet represents the wars of a period, the nation playing the leading role being especially described. The recent world-war was probably a part of the second woe unless it was a sort of prelude to Armageddon which was stopped because of the plea of the angel with the sealing message. See Rev. 7:1-3. Clemenceau declared that the peace following the Armistice "is only a lull in the storm". This lull is caused by the angels holding in check the winds of war till the servants of God are sealed for the kingdom. No human power could restrain the winds of human passion.

Little Time of Peace. "I was shown the inhabitants of the earth in the utmost confusion. War, bloodshed, privation, want, famine, and pestilence were abroad in the land....My attention was then called from the scene. There seemed to be a little time of peace. Once more the inhabitants of the earth were presented before me; and again everything was in the utmost confusion. Strife, war, and bloodshed, with famine and pestilence, raged everywhere. Other nations were engaged in this war and confusion. War caused famine. Want and bloodshed caused pestilence. And then men's hearts failed them for fear, 'and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.'"--Vol. 1:268. Men and nations do not yet know what perplexity and confusion mean.

The Coming Crisis. "The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the strained, restless relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place,--that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis. Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, that they may not blow until the world shall be warned of its coming doom; but a storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth; and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture."--Ed. 179,180.

Close of Probation. v. 15. The announcement of the loud voices indicates the close of probation and the end of Satan's rule. "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ."--R.V. "The kingdom of this world has become."--E.D. "The rule of the world has passed."-Moffatt. "The sovereignty of the world now belongs to our Lord and His Christ."-Wey. It is at the close of probation that Christ ceases to be Priest and becomes King. He won the right to rule the world when He died on the cross but does not assume the rulership till the plan of redemption has finished its work and the roll of the citizenship of His kingdom is made up. It is evident from this verse that the seventh trumpet or third woe does not begin till probation closes. See also Dan. 12:1,2.

The Kingdom. The earth is called the kingdom or dominion. Dan. 2:44; 7:18,22,26,27. This kingdom was first given to Adam who forfeited his right through sin and surrendered the dominion to Satan. Luke 4:6. Satan has claimed dominion since the fall of man and is divinely called "the prince of this world". The lost dominion of the first Adam was won back by the second Adam through His Calvary victory. Micah 4:8. The kingdom will be restored to Adam and his descendents after its complete redemption. Dan. 7:13,14,27; Matt. 25:34.

Gospel Work Finished. The Two Witnesses must "finish", "complete", or "fully deliver" their testimony before God will permit the seventh and most terrible war-scourge to desolate the earth. While the Two Witnesses are finishing their testimony in a final world message, angels of God are holding in check the winds of war. Not until the four angels cease to restrain can the seventh trumpet sound. They let go only when the sealing angel has finished his work. Rev. 10:7. "When he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God."-R.V. "When he is ready to blow his blast."-20th C.N.T. "As yet the four winds are held until the servants shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth shall marshal their forces for the last great battle."--Vol. 6:14.

Scene in Throne Room. v. 16, 17. "We give thee thanks...because thou hast exerted thy power, thy great power, and hast become King."-Wey. When probation closes and Christ stands up and closes His priestly service and becomes King, the 24 elders who have assisted Him since the day of Pentecost in His mediatorial work, arise from their thrones and bow before His throne in humility and adoration and give thanks that at last the work of redemption has accomplished its task and the reign of Satan is over. The close of probation brings rejoicing to the occupants of the heavenly temple, but to the wicked inhabitants of earth it ushers in a time of trouble and confusion. The spirits of demons, no longer restrained, are turned loose to control the earth.

War of Armageddon. v. 18. "The nations were enraged."-E.D.; Moffatt. The wrath of the nations and the wrath of God come at the same time which is another proof that Armageddon does not come till the close of probation. "The nations grew angry, and Thine anger has come."-Wey. God's wrath comes as the result of the rejection of His last message and begins when probation closes and the plagues begin to fall. See Rev. 14:9,10,14; 15:1. This is also proven by Daniel 12:1,2. Daniel and the Revelator describe the same events beginning with the standing up of Michael.

A Time of Wrath. The pent up fury of an offended God and that of the nations break forth at the same time. "When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended--- The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old."--G.C.614. The saints alone will be protected from Satanic influences during this time of trouble. Ps. 91.

Includes Gog and Magog. The third woe or seventh trumpet will doubtless include the war of God and Magog at the close of the millennium. Rev. 20:7-15. The great battle of Armageddon is cut short by the coming of Christ when the millions of fighting men are suddenly stricken down by the glory of the coming of Christ. At the end of the 1000 years they are resurrected and come up with the same fighting instinct. It doesn't take Satan long to marshall them against the New Jerusalem as he had against the Old Jerusalem before the millennium. Gog and Magog is really a continuation of the Armageddon war. The last and most terrible war scourge must include the last and greatest war.

The Dead Judged. "The appointed time of the dead."-F. D. "Judge", here especially has the meaning of rendering justice. For this time the martyred dead through their spilled blood have been crying. Rev. 6:9-11. The righteous have been pilgrims and strangers in this rebel world under Satan's rulership. They have been unjustly persecuted and for them judgment is often "turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." Isa. 59:14. At last the heavenly tribunal renders justice and from the decision there is no appeal. This also includes the examining of the books of record and the deciding of the cases of all who have lived on the earth from Adam down, most of whom are dead and in their graves when probation closes. See Rev.20:12-15.

Saints Rewarded. "The time for rewarding etc."-Moffatt. "The time for Thee to give their reward."-Wey. When does the time come to reward the saints for their loyalty? Rev. 22:12,14; Isa 40: 9,10; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:8. It was at this time that Daniel expected to be rewarded. Dan.12:2,3,13. The rewards of the righteous dead are not given at death but when Jesus comes and calls them from their graves. It is after God's wrath is past that the righteous are resurrected and rewarded. See Job 14:13; Isa. 26:19-21. The prophets have received the brunt of Satan's attacks and persecutions and therefore they are first mentioned among those to be rewarded.

The Rewarding Time. "This side the grave, full justice is never done; and up to the great day, no one receives entirely all his deserts. That is reserved for the period of resurrection. ...Only the resurrection life is full retribution life. Incomplete and unequal are all the administrations here....The wicked go unpunished, are even honored in their crimes...Beyond is the theatre on which final settlement is to be made, and there is the invincible throne of inexorable justice. There shall all earth's wrongs be righted, all present inequalities adjusted, and the administrations of God forever vindicated....The prophets all were persecuted and injured men, who lived martyr lives if they did not come to martyr deaths. For all these ages, the children of God have been children of affliction and sorrow....But no Christian looks for his compensation in this present world."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol 2, pp. 265-267.

Destroyers Destroyed. "Who corrupt the earth."-Margin and E. D. In Rev. 9:11 Satan is called Apollyon or the Destroyer. This is also applied to his agents. The destruction of the earth is also charged to Satan in Isa. 14:16,17. Satan is responsible for the curse of sin under which the earth is corrupted or defiled. Isa. 24:5; Gen.6:11-13. The papal power is called "the abomination of desolation" or the "desolator" by the prophet Daniel. God's sentence against the wicked is destruction or annihilation and not conscious eternal torment.

The Sanctuary Opened. v.19. "Then the doors of God's Sanctuary in Heaven were opened, and the Ark, in which His covenant was, was seen in His Sanctuary."-Wey. This is clearly a view into the throne room where the solemn work of judgment had been carried on since 1844. Here the dead had been judged and their rewards determined. The Sanctuary had been opened for Christ's meditorial service on the Day of Pentecost, and the throne room opened for judgment at the close of the 2300 years. In the typical service the holy of holies was opened on the tenth day of the seventh month when the high priest went in to make atonement and cleanse the sanctuary. The door was closed after him and opened again when his work was finished and he passed out. The second opening represented the end of the typical service and the close of probation.

Sanctuary Service Ended. The opening of the temple here pictured takes place when Christ finishes His priestly service for man and leaves the Sanctuary. With the solemn announcement "It is done" Christ leaves the sanctuary and places the sins of the righteous on the head of Satan, the antitypical scapegoat. This is the time that Jesus throws down the golden incense censer as described in Rev. 8:5. That both of these describe the close of probation is evident from the result: "And there came flashes of lightning, and voices, and peals of thunder, and an earthquake, and heavy hail."-Wey. Rev.16:17-21 locates these events during the seven last plagues.

Trumpets Reach the End. Like the seven seals, the seven trumpets reach down to the end of Christ's meditorial work in heaven and His gospel work on earth both embrace the day of indignation and the triumph of the church militant. When the seventh seal is broken there is silence in heaven and when the seventh trumpet sounds there is anger among the nations of earth and the utmost confusion as the spirits of demons gain full control for a short time before they meet their doom. Then the saints of the most High will enter upon their endless inheritance.

Memory Text: Rev. 11:15

THE WOMAN AND RED DRAGON

41

Great Skeleton Prophecy. Revelation 12 is the greatest skeleton prophecy of the Bible spanning more than 6000 years from the inception of sin and the revolt of Lucifer to the final attack of Satan on the remnant of Christ's church. Calvin Coolidge wrote a 500 word history of the United States; the prophet Daniel wrote a 300 word prophecy of the world's history from the days of Babylon to the second advent of Christ, covering 2500 years; but the Revelator in one brief chapter records prophetic history that embraces six millenniums of the tragedy of sin and the struggles of the church militant. This outline of history sketches Satan's varied activities against the government of God; it presents a panorama of the long war between Michael and Lucifer; it lifts the curtain on the great drama of life and death in one great act.

Four Phases. This chapter presents the war between Christ and Satan in four of its five phases. (1) The beginning of the controversy in heaven. (2) During Christ's earthly visit. (3) During the apostolic church period and down through the middle ages. (4) War on the remnant of the church. The remainder of the Revelation completed the panorama giving in detail the struggles between Satan and the remnant; the victory of the church militant; the defeat and punishment of Satan; and the final and complete triumph of the forces of righteousness. The fifth and last phase of the conflict takes place after the millennium.

The Symbolic Woman. Rev. 12:1. "Great sign"--R.V. and Margin. This indicates that symbols are employed. A woman is used as the symbol of the church of Christ. The church is represented as His bride or wife. See Jer. 6:2; Isa. 54:5,6; Hosea 2:19,20; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7,8. Just as a pure woman or virgin is symbolic of the church of Christ, so an impure or corrupt woman is used to represent the fallen and corrupt church or bride of Satan. Rev. 17:1-5; Jer. 3:1,8; Eze. 16:23; Isa. 50:1. A comely and virtuous woman is a beautiful symbol of the church of Christ. As Eve, the first woman and mother of the human race, was made from the rib of the first Adam while he was in deep sleep, so that they became "one flesh", so the church is the wife of the second Adam and came into being through His death-sleep and resurrection so that "we are members of His body, and of His flesh, and of His bones". Eph. 5:30. Marriage represents the closest unity possible.

The Bride of Christ. "Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church, of which, as His chosen one, He says, 'Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee.'"--M.H. 356.

"In both the Old and New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall bring home His bride to the Father's house, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb. He Says, 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.' 'Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken;...but thou shalt be called My Delight;...for the Lord delightest in thee.' 'He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing.'"--D.A. 151.

One Church in All Ages. The church is called Christ's "body" and He can have but one body. Eph. 1:22,23; 4:4. Ancient Israel was called "the church". Acts. 7:38. "All of God's people upon the earth are one body, from the beginning to the end of time. They have one Head that directs and governs the body."--Vol. 1:283. From the fall of man there has been but one plan of redemption; one standard of righteousness; and one body of believers. "We regard the woman as the symbol of God's religious system on earth from the beginnong of His testimony until the consummation." --"The Vision of Patmos", Davis, p. 178. All the great symbols of this chapter are ages embracing.

The Queen of Christ. "There has really been but one Church on earth, existing through all times and under all economies. And so we have here, this one glorious woman, in whom all its highest excellences and chief characteristics are summed up from the beginning even unto the great consummation....It is wonderful also what a profound and complete view of the Church, in all its deepest peculiarities, excellences, office, and prospects, is here given in one single picture, at once as simple as it is sublime....The Church is the woman, in her creation from the second Adam, in her naming after Christ, and in her receptivity, love, maternity, trusting dependence, beauty, and willing obedience. She is the betrothed of the Lord, His Bride, His Queen, partaker of His inmost love, and all His estate and kingdom, having her joy in Him and His in her. Nor is there another image known to man which more richly and truly sets forth that mystic body, which we recognize and identify in every age as the Church or people of God."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 2, pp. 277-279.

Sign in Heaven. The word church means "assembly" or "congregation". It is the family of God including in its broad sense all His children in the universe. All are one family and make up the universal church. Eph. 3:14,15; Heb. 12:22,23. The church includes all whose names are written or enrolled in the New Jerusalem. "The church on earth united with the church in h heaven, can accomplish all things."--Vol. 7:31. "The church of God below is one with the church of God above. Believers on earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church."--Vol. 6:366. Not only did Satan's attacks against the church begin in heaven but the part of the church on earth is really "in heavenly places" and lives in the atmosphere of heaven. Eph. 2:6; Col. 1:13. We are told of Enoch, that "while still on earth, he dwelt by faith, in the realms of light. He lived in the atmosphere of heaven."--Vol. 8:330,331.

Clothed With Sun. "Arrayed with the sun". R.V. "Whose robe was the sun."-20th C.N.T. The sun is a symbol of Christ who is the "Sun of Righteousness" and the "Light of the World". Mal. 4:2; John 8:12; 9:5. What is the robe or garment of the church or bride of Christ? Christians are said to "put on the armour of light" by putting on "the Lord Jesus Christ". Rom. 13:12,14; Gal. 3:27. To put on Christ is to be clothed in His character or righteousness which is the wedding garment of His bride the church. Isa. 52:1; 61:10; Rev. 19:7,8. Only when the church is clothed with Christ's righteousness is it the light of the world. Matt. 5:14-16. Christians are called "the children of light", "after ye were illuminated". -Luke 16:8; Eph. 5:8; Heb. 10:32.

Foundation of Church. The moon is the symbol of permanency. Psalms 89:35-37. The church of all ages stands on the permanent foundation of Christ, the Rock of Ages, or the Living Word, as revealed through the writings of the apostles and prophets. 1 Cor. 3:10,11; Isa. 28:16; Eph. 2:20-22. As the moon shines because of a borrowed light from the sun so the Word shines because illuminated by Christ, the "Sun of Richteousness." The moon is not trampled under foot, but it upholds the woman or church.

Crown of Twelve Stars. Since the woman represents the church of all ages, the 12 stars must symbolize the 12 divisions of the church in both dispensations, and also the 12 apostles who are the 12 leading lights of the Christian church since Christ's first advent. The church is still divided into 12 companies according to the 12 most prominent characteristics. James 1:1; Rev. 7:2-4. The church triumphant will also continue these 12 divisions or nations. Matt. 19:27,28; Luke 22:28-30. This rulership of the 12 apostle kings over the 12 nations of redeemed Israel is doubtless symbolized by the "crown of 12 stars". A crown is the symbol of rulership or kingly authority.

The Man Child. v. 2,5. "She cried out"-R.V. "She was crying out in the pains and agony of child birth."-Wey. There can be no reasonable question but this Man Child, expected by and born of the church, was Christ. He was still called the "child" at the time of His crecifixion and even after His ascension. See Acts 4:27,30. Christ was caught up to God and His throne after His resurrection. Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1; Heb. 8:1. He is to rule or shepherd all nations with a "rod of iron". Psalms 2:7-9; Rev. 19:15,16. "Who is to shepherd all nations"-Moffatt. Jeses was to come and "shepherd" His people Israel. Matt. 2:6 R.V. Prophecy declared that Christ would be born to the church and is called in prophecy a "man child". Isa. 66:7. "And she was delivered of a son, a man child."--Rev. 12:5. R.V. "The man child is the Lord Jesus Christ and none other."-Dean Alford.

The Expectant Mother. How long had the church been waiting for the birth of Christ before He was born? Ever since the promise was made to Eve in the Garden of Eden. Gen. 3:15. From this promise down through the ages the church waited, hoped and prayed for the coming of the promised Seed or Deliverer. Every godly mother who gave birth to a male child hoped and prayed that He would be the Messiah. This was the principal reason the male children were preferred to the female. Eve thought Cain was the promised deliverer. All true saints like Simeon, "was waiting for the consolation of Israel," Luke 2:25. When John the Baptist appeared with his message "the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not." Luke 3:15. For 4000 years the church waited for the coming of the "man child", and was especially expectant at the time Jesus was born.

The Red Dragon, v. 3,4. "Huge dragon."-Moffatt. "Fiery-red dragon" -Wey. Red is symbolic of sin, anarchy and rebellion. Isa. 1:18; Rev. 6:4; 17:1-6. It is still the symbol of anarchy and revolt against law and order. Dragons are used in Scripture as symbols of desolating, persecuting, tyrannizing powers. Crocodiles and serpents were also called dragons and doubtless the dinasaur was also so designated. A lizzard-like dragon 12 feet in length still exists. The ancient poet described the dragon as "huge is size, coiled like a snake, blood-red in color, or shot with changing tints." The pagan Romans used the image of a dragon on their standards as well as the eagle. These dragon standards were red. "The purple standard of the dragon."-Ammanus Marcellinus, lib. XVI, C 12. "The first standard of the whole legion is the eagle, which the aquilifer carries. Dragons are also borne to battle by the draconarii."--Vegetius, lib. 11, C. 13. (386 A.D.) Thus the dragon is a most appropriate symbol of a Satanic power.

Also in Heaven. The symbol of the red dragon is also seen in heaven. In verses 7-9 we are told that the dragon primarily is the devel and Satan who was cast out of heaven. The first war between the dragon and Christ, or between the two systems, took place in heaven and was later transferred to earth. Because the controversy began in heaven the symbol first appears to the prophet as being in heaven. Then to we are told that Satan and his angels carry on their warfare against the church "in high places." Eph. 6:12. "Heavenly places"-Margin. "The man of sin" and "son of perdition," who primarily is Satan, "sits in the temple of God, etc."-2 Thes. 2:3,4. In Matt.24:15 we are told that "the abomination os desolation" would stand "in the holy place". The war is still being fought in heaven in one sense. The revolt began in heaven and Satan's downfall also began there. Satan's last conquest was the earth and so here he makes his last stand and meets his final doom.

Parallel With Woman. Both the woman and dragon had their origin in heaven, and began their conflict in heaven. After Satan was cast to the earth he carried on his warfare with the earthly part of the church. The two systems have come down since Eden as rival powers, antagonistic to each other. "As the sun-clad woman denotes the Church in its entirety with reference to the final termination, so this dragon denotes the devil in his entirety with reference to the same."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 2; p. 296. Since the woman is a symbol of the church, (or God's spiritual kingdom, the dragon is a symbol of Satan's counterfeit kingdom. Both are universal and embrace all human history. "The Church and the Devil, the kingdom of heaven and the powers of darkness, have ever been the two great antagonizing forces on the earth. The one is the spirit of mercy, embodied in the work of man's deliverance; the other is the spirit of malignity, going about to crush and kill every tendency, power, or prospect of man's salvation."-- Id. p. 311.

Memory Text: Rev. 12:1.

WAR BETWEEN MICHAEL AND LUCIFER

42

War in Heaven. Rev. 12:7-9. Verses 7-13 is an interruption in the narrative of the warfare of the dragon against the Child and the woman. The purpose of this parenthetical narrative is to give the background of the controversy and the reason for the relentless hostility of Satan towards Christ and His church. Verses 7-9 apply primarily to about the time the world was created when the mighty Prince Lucifer attempted to seize equality with God. It carries us back to the origin of sin and its intrusion into the universe. In a secondary sense these verses apply to the great struggle between Christ and Satan during Christ's earthly visit. Verses 10-13 relate to Christ's Calvary victory and its results in heaven and on earth.

Place of War. v. 7. "Then a battle took place in the heavens."-20th C.N.T. "And war broke out in heaven."-Wey. Just as the symbolic woman was seen in heaven, and the great red dragon appeared in heaven, so the warfare is also said to be in heaven. War had its origin in the Heaven of heavens around the very throne of God. There the controversy had its origin. It was later transferred to earth which has since been the stage of the theater of war. But it is still a struggle over what was once a part of heaven and will again be after the conflict is over. The dragon's attacks are all against the kingdom of heaven as manifested by the church. It is called a "heavenly warfare". Eph. 6:12. Wey.

Leading Actors. Michael means, "Like unto God," and Christ alone is in "the image of the invisible God," and it the "express image of His person." Michael was the "first prince" of the kingdom; the Prince of God's people who will eventually stand up to reign; He is the archangel or Captain of the Lord's host; He is none other than Christ, the Son of God. See Dan. 10:13,21; 12:1; Jude 9; 1 Thes. 4:16. It is Michael's voice that calls the dead to life on the resurrection morning and Christ alone is the Lifegiver. John 5:25-29. The angels of Michael are those who remained loyal to Him during the crisis. Because of Gabriel's loyalty to the government of God he was exalted to take the place left vacant by Lucifer, the first of the anointed covering cherubs. Gabriel means, "Hero of God."

Leader of Revolt. Michael's antagonist was the "dragon" who is also called "the Devil" and "Satan". His original name was "Lucifer", which means "Light Bearer", or "Sun of the Morning". Isa. 14:12-14. Prince Lucifer held a position in the government of heaven next to Michael. He was the first of the anointed covering cherubs who guarded the throne. He ministered in the throne-room in the most exalted position a created being could occupy. His wisdom, beauty, glory, and power, were unsurpassed except by members of the Godhead. See Eze. 28:11-17. "He stood in the presence of the great Creator, and the ceaseless beams of glory enshrouding the eternal God, rested upon him."--P.P. 35. Lucifer was God's chief messenger; the chief musician and leader of the celestial choir and orchestra. He was virtually the prime minister of the kingdom of God.

Lucifer's Fall. Lucifer became envious of Michael and coveted the position and glory which was His. He said, "I will be like the Most High", and Michael alone was like the Most High. He was jealous because of the creative power of Michael and because all the angelic host worshiped Him. Lucifer craved worship which no created being could receive. In attempting to seize equality with God Lucifer lost his own position and glory and was deposed from his high estate. See Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4. In Rev.12:8 it says "And he prevailed not, neither was his place found any more in heaven." "But he failed."-Moffatt.

His Angels. According to Rev. 12:4 a third of the angelic host joined Lucifer in the revolt and fell with him. "His tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and flung them to the earth."-Moffatt. "Hurled them down to the earth."-20th C.N.T. Angels are called stars. Job 38:7; Isa. 14:13; Rev. 1:20. "The dragon fought and so did his angels; but they were defeated, and there was no longer any room found for them in heaven.... The great Dragon...was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him."-Rev. 12:8,9. Wey. There can be no question but the stars and angels which were "cast" or "hurled" out of heaven to the earth, represent the same. The angels who joined Lucifer and fell with him were among the highest and most exalted in the heavenly kingdom. See D.A. 760.

Victory of Michael. v. 9. In the first battle Michael and His angels were victorious and Lucifer and his angels were cast out of their offices in the government of God. They came to this earth and usurped Adam's dominion and Satan became the "prince of this world". Our text calls him, "The deceiver of the whole world"--R.V. "The seducer of the whole world."-Moffatt. As the ruler over Adam's dominion Satan succeeded to Adam's position as the representative of this earth in the councils of heaven and for 4000 years Satan was the only official representative this world had before the throne of God. There he spent his time "day and night" accusing the brethren or those who refused to acknowledge his authority. Job 1:6; Rev. 12:10. After hearing the promise made to Eve, Satan knew that his opportunity would come when Michael would strip Himself of His power and be incarnated in human flesh. He was no match for Michael in heaven but he felt he would be able to defeat him as a human being.

The Dragon Waited. v. 4. "The dragon stood before the woman." "Was standing"--Wey. The language indicates a waiting and expecting attitude. He did not know the time of the birth of the Deliverer any more than did the church, for that "secret" "lay concealed in the mind of God". Satan waited for the birth of the man child just as long as the church waited,--from the time of the first promise till He was born in Bethlehem. Like Eve, Satan also thought Cain was the promised Seed and he made a special effort to lead him astray and succeeded. Fearing righteous Abel was the child of promise he inspired Cain to slay him. He doubtless thought that Isaac, the child of promise, was the promised Messiah, because through him "all the families of the earth" were to be blessed.

Student of Prophecy. Satan's knowledge of the promised Messiah was gained through the revelations of the prophets. "When God's written word was given through the Hebrew prophets, Satan studied with diligence the messages concerning the Messiah. Carefully he traced the words that outlined with unmistakable clearness Christ's work among men as a suffering sacrifice and as a conquering king."--P.K. 686. The first time-prophecy Satan studied was the one given Abraham; declaring that at the end of the 400 years of bondage in Egypt the Lord would send a deliverer. He doubtless concluded that this deliverance would be effected by the promised Seed. For this reason he inspired Pharaoh to decree that all male children of the Hebrews should be killed by the midwives. Ex. 1:16. Because of the escape of Moses and his future leadership Satan may have thought him the incarnated Michael and therefore centered his attacks against him.

First Definite Knowledge. Satan first knew the approximate time of the birth of the Christ from Daniel's 2300 year time prophecy, which pointed out the year of His anointing as the Messiah. As the 483 years drew to a close the dragon stood before the woman or church with even more expectancy than God's own professed people. It was his long expected and looked for opportunity. His first attempt was in the slaying of all the male children of Bethlehem and its coasts through the cruel Herod. But this was only the beginning of his efforts to destroy the "man child". He was doubtless in doubt regarding the identity of the Christ till the baptism of Jesus when the descent of the Holy Spirit and the voice of the Father assured him that Jesus was indeed Michael.

Further Identity. Immediately after the baptism of Jesus, Satan made a desperate attack on Him, the result of which further confirmed His identity as Michael. "Satan had questioned whether Jesus was the Son of God. In his summary dismissal he had proof that he could not gainsay. Divinity flashed through suffering humanity. Satan had no power to resist the command. Writhing with humiliation and rage, he was forced to withdraw from the presence of the world's Redeemer. Christ's victory was as complete as had been the failure of Adam."--D.A. 130. Satan then actuated the Jewish leaders with the dragon spirit and they hounded Christ's footsteps night and day for three and a half years in an effort to destroy Him. They finally succeeded through the Roman officials in actually putting Him to death. This however, was not the kind of destruction Satan had planned. The Calvary death was victory for Christ and a most ignominious defeat for Satan which sounded the death knell of his kingdom.

The Decisive Battle. "The principalities and powers of darkness were assembled around the cross, casting the hellish shadow of unbelief into the hearts of men....Satanic agencies confederated with evil men in leading the people to believe Christ the chief of sinners, and to make Him the object of detestation. Those who mocked Christ as He hung upon the cross were imbued with the spirit of the first great rebel. He filled them with vile and loathsome speeches. He inspired their taunts. But by all this he gained nothing....By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted....The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken."--D.A. 760,761. "The battle had been won....All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost."--Id. p. 758.

Result of Victory. v. 10. "Now has begun the day of salvation."--20th C.N.T. The death of Christ as a Victor sealed the covenant and made sure the plan of redemption. It destroyed all sympathy for Satan in heaven and reconciled the universe to God. Col. 1:20. Up until Calvary Satan as the "prince of this world" spent most of his time before the throne of God accusing God's people on earth. "He who day after day and night after night was want to accuse them in the presence of God."-Wey. See Job 1:6. All heaven waw glad when Satan lost his position as the representative of this world and could no longer enter the throne room and accuse the brethren. Christ, the second Adam, became the representative of this world after His victory.

Shout of Triumph. With a loud voice a united universe celebrated the victory of Christ on the cross. "As Christ in His expiring agony upon the cross cried out, 'It is finished', a shout of triumph rang through every world, and through heaven itself. The great contest that had been so long in progress in this world was now decided, and Christ was conqueror....Satan had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit with which he had ruled the children of men who were under his power, he would have manifested if permitted to control the intelligences of heaven. With one voice the loyal universe united in extolling the divine administration."--P.P. 70. The members of the church in heaven rejoiced because Satan could no longer accuse the members of the church on earth whom they call "brethren".

Secret of Victory. v. 11. "Their victory was due to the blood of the Lamb and the Message to which they bore testimony."-20th C.N.T. This is still a part of the triumphant shout of the loyal and unfallen universe. "They" refers to the "brethren" whom Satan has been accusing since the fall of man. Since the sacrifice offered by Adam and Eve and Abel, all acceptors of the plan of redemption have overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb and their testimony as to its merits. Their loyalty even to martyrdom is commended. "They held their lives cheap and did not shrink even from death."--Wey. In the great honor roll of faith in Hebrews 11, many of these victors are named and others referred to as having remained loyal "even unto death". During the Pagan Roman persecutions of the second and third centuries and again during the Dark Ages, millions more won victories through the same triumphant weapons,-the blood of the Lamb and the sword of the Spirit. God's plan of salvation and man's overcoming power center in the cross of Calvary. "Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song."--D.A. 20.

Memory Text: Rev. 12:11.

THE WRATH OF THE DRAGON

43

Rejoicing in Heaven. Rev. 12:12. "For this reason be glad, O Heaven."--Wey. For what reason? Because the Calvary victory of Christ was decisive and sounded the death knell of Satan's revolt. This crushing defeat cast Satan out of the last official position in the government of God, that of prince of this world and its representative in the parliament of Heaven. As Christ approached the final battle He foretold its consequence. John 12:31,32. "When the last steps of Christ's humiliation were to be taken, when the deepest sorrow was closing about His soul, He said to His disciples, 'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.' 'The prince of this world is judged.' Now shall he be cast out. With prophetic eye Christ traced the scenes to take place in His last great conflict. He knew that when He should exclaim, 'It is finished' all heaven would triumph. His ear caught the distant music and the shouts of victory in the heavenly courts. He knew that the knell of Satan's empire would be sounded, and the name of Christ would be heralded from world to world throughout the universe."--D.A. 679.

Woe to Earth. This is still a part of what the celebrating inhabitants of heaven are saying. What is the cause of the woe? "Because the devil is gond down unto you having great wrath."-R.V. "Descended to you in fierce anger."-Moffatt. "Has gone down to you in great fury."-20th C.N.T. This is clearly spoken by those in heaven from whence Satan was expelled. They rejoiced that they no longer had to listen to his accusations and insinuations against the saints on earth and the divine administration in heaven. Defeated in every battle with Christ, Satan can do naught but make war on Christ's people on earth, and to whem he comes down in great wrath.

Cause of Wrath. "Full of fierce anger because he knows that his appointed time is short."--Wey. Satan never knew till his defeat by Christ on the cross of Calvary that his revolt was a failure and that it was only a question of time till he must meet his doom. Up to that time he had hopes for success. He was sure he could defeat the Son of God while he was in weak, sinful, human flesh. One sin on the part of Christ would have been sufficient to ruin the plan of redemption. "Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan to escape the terrible torture, the enemy of God and man would have triumphed."--D.A. 761. In his disappointment and rage Satan determined to do his successful rival all the damage possiblebefore the end. His work was at an end in heaven. The only battle ground left is the earth, and against its inhabitants he gives vent to his wrath with increasing fury.

Defeat Realized. v. 13. "And when the devil found himself thrown down to earth."-Wey. When Christ died a victor, Satan "saw" or realized that he was defeated and that his activities were at an end except in this earth. "Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. The arch-apostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion."--D.A. 758. "Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe."--Id. p. 761.

Satan's Revenge. v. 13. When the dragon realized that he had failed in his supreme effort to overcome the man child, he sought to take revenge on the church. "He pursued the woman."--20th C.N.T. "He went in pursuit of the woman."--Wey. His attacks against the woman are on account of the child. Where did the dragon pursue the woman? v. 6,14. With verse 13 the narrative of verses 1-6 continues. Defeated in his attempts to overthrow Michael in heaven, and in his war against the "man child" on earth, Satan now directs his attacks against the woman or the bride of Christ. Before Calvary the dragon power carried on its activities throughout the entire universe. Satan spent most of his time before the throne of God. He hoped to get other worlds to join him and wasn't so much concerned about this little world with its few saints. After Calvary all was changed. With all sympathy in heaven swept away, Satan was compelled to draw in his forces and direct them against the citizens of Christ's kingdom on earth, the only ones left within his reach. Most all the persecutions against the church have been since Calvary.

Refuge of Church. v. 6. The dragon's first attack was through pagan Rome during the second and third centuries. The greatest, however, was during the Dark Ages while the papacy ruled the world. Christ had foretold the flight of the church to the mountains and the reasons for it. See Matt. 24:15,16,20-22; Mark 13:14. The "abomination of desolation" is the papacy, and during the 1260 years this apostate power would enter "the temple of God", and "pollute the sanctuary of strength" and trample under foot "both the sanctuary and the host" or "the saints of the most High". See 2 Thes. 2:3,4; Dan. 11:31; 8:10-12; 7:25. During this time the saints had to find refuge in the mountains of the Alps and the Pyrenees.

Asylum Prepared. "A place which God had prepared for her."--Wey. The world contains no more natural fortifications than those in which the Waldenses and Albigenses found refuge. The retreat was "prepared of God" at the time of the flood. Not only did those rocky fortresses provide refuge but the retired valleys furnished food for the refugees. "That they should nourish her there."--R.V. This doubtless refers especially to spiritual food or the "bread of life". These pilgrims preserved the Scriptures in much of their purity and also much of the faith and practice of the apostolic church. Many of them were observers of the true Sabbath. They sowed the first seeds of truth that made possible the great Protestant Reformation.

Wings of an Eagle. v. 14. This is a parallel of the experience of ancient Israel when the church fled from the dragon in Egypt into the wilderness for refuge. In Eze. 29:3 Pharaoh is called the dragon. The Lord carried His people out of Egypt as "on eagles wings" to a place of refuge in the wilderness. Ex. 19:4.

The task of the Lord in getting Israel to leave Egypt is illustrated by the method of the mother eagle in teaching her young to fly. See Deut. 32:10-13. After stirring up the nest the mother pushes the eaglet out and then, before it reaches the ground swoops under it and bears it back to a place of safety on her wings. The Lord nourished His people for 40 years with manna and also with spiritual food. The experience of ancient Israel was duplicated by the church when she had to flee to the mountains "for one year, two years, and a half a year." --20th C.N.T. This being prophetic time represents 1260 years.

The Dragon Power. It is evident that the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns is not a description of Satan in person. It is rather a symbol of his kingdom or government throughout its entire history. It includes every earthly power used by him in making war on the child and the woman. The dragon power cannot be confined to any one nation for it was the dragon that fought with Michael in heaven; it was the dragon who caused the downfall of a third of the angelic host; it was the dragon that waited 4000 years for the birth of Christ. After the ascension of Christ the dragon pursued the woman or church into the wilderness for 1260 years, and the same power makes war on the remnant. v. 17.

Includes All Kingdoms. Seven is the symbol of completeness and therefore represents all. Both the heads and horns represent earthly kingdoms. Rev. 17:10,12. They include all the kingdoms of this world through which Satan, "the prince of this world", has ruled and persecuted. "The seven heads may fitly represent the multiplied worldly powers which the evil one brings against Christ and His church....The whole scene is expressive of the great powers which from the beginning wage war with the Lamb." --R. Green in "Pulpit Commentary". "Here Satan is depicted as a great red monster having seven heads and ten horns and upon his heads crowns. This and other similar presentations are surely given just to indicate the universality of Satanic power in the world....The heads and horns and crowns simply express various phases of his earthly power."--"Studies in the Book of Revelation," Lamb, pp. 220, 221.

Satanic Rulership. "The head is the governing power, and implies rule. When crowned it implies political rulership. These seven heads of the dragon are all crowned heads. He is an imperial personage....The number of these crowned heads is seven, which is the number of dispensational fulness, the earthly complete number. Hence we have in these heads the symbol of the entire imperial government of this world from beginning to end, the universal secular dominion of the earth in all periods....We need not bother ourselves then about the seven hillocks on which the city of Rome was built; nor about the seven administrations, or forms of dominion, or dynasties, which are said to have marked the history of the Roman Empire....The number is the symbol of full completeness, which takes in all of its kind in the whole world period. It is nothing more nor less than earth's political sovereignty, however and wherever put forth, from beginning to the day of judgment, that is embraced in these crowned heads."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 2, pp. 302-304.

Seven Universal Powers. The seven heads are declared to be seven mountains in Rev. 17:9, 10. Of the seven mountains it says, "and they are seven kings"--R.V. Mountains are symbolic of governments or kingdoms. There have been just seven universal powers that have ruled over all the earth and made war on the saints. "The seven heads denote universal earthly powers.... 1 Egypt, 2 Assyria, 3 Babylon, 4 Medo-Persia, 5 Greece, 6 Rome and the 7 Confederation with the 'Prince' as seventh head, constitute the seven heads."--"The Vision of Patmos", Davis, pp. 182, 184. These are given in their proper order, only Papal Rome is the seventh. The last five are given in order in the prophecies of Daniel and the first three are named in order in Isa. 52:4; Jer. 50:17; Eze. 23:3-17.

The First Head. Egypt was the first universal power and the first organized nation to persecute God's people as a nation or church. Egypt under the Pharaohs was called the dragon. Eze. 29:2,3. It was the dragon under the first of the seven heads that persecuted and held captive ancient Israel. Ex. 1:13,14. The rule of Egypt as a universal power was from 1780 to 1492 B.C. "Egypt became by her victories, the arbitress of the whole civilized world."--"Manuel of the Ancient History of the East", Book 3, chap. 3, Sec. 2, par. 3. Homer said of Thebes, the Egyptian capital: "The world's greatest empress on the Egyptian plain; That spread her conquests over a thousand states."--"Lliad", Book 9, Pope's Translation.

World Empire. "There is some uncertainty as to the extent of her conquests; but no reasonable doubt can be entertained that for a space of 300 years Egypt was the most powerful and most aggressive state that the world contained, and held a dominion that has as much right to be called an empire as the Assyrian, the Babylonian, or Persian. While Babylonia, ruled by Arab conquerors, declined in strength, and Assyria proper was merely struggling for independence, Egypt put forth her arms and grasped the fairest regions of the earth's surface."--"Ancient Egypt", Rawlinson, chap. 10, par. 6.

Other Six Heads. Assyria was the second world empire to persecute God's people and lead them captive. See 2 Kings 15:29; 17:6; 18:13; Isa. 36 and 37. Her universal rulership was from 1120 to 620 B.C. Assyria is also called the dragon. Isa. 27:1. It was the dragon power under the second head. The third head was Babylon which also led captive and persecuted God's people. Babylonian history as a universal power was between 606 and 538 B.C. The king of Babylon is said to be "like a dragon" in his persecutions against Israel. Jer. 51:34-36. The fourth head was medo-Persia; the fifth Grecia; the sixth Pagan Rome; and the seventh, Papal Rome. The ten horns represent the kingdoms of divided Rome or the lesser than universal civil powers during the reign of the religio-political seventh head.

Memory Text: Rev. 12:12.

THE DRAGON'S LAST ATTACK

44

The Relentless Dragon. Satan has carried on his reign and persecutions through many earthly powers but it is always the same great red dragon. "Nor was it essentially different after Paganism was dethroned, and the cross appeared upon the imperial banners. The tactics changed, but it was still the Dragon that wrought. Outward oppression was broken, but then came inward assaults, corruption, and decay. The sword of state for a while was sheathed, but then was drawn the more killing weapon of domineering heresy. Soon also the tira became the imperial crown, the wearer of it the world's dictator, and kings and governments the slaves and menials of another Rome, robed in Christian symbols indeed, but at heart the Dragon still, with fagot, and bloody inquisition, and bans of terrible damnation, striving to enforce its blasphemous assumptions and soul-destroying lies."-"The Apocalypse", Seiss,Vol.2,p.314.

Last Effort Through Papacy. Rev. 12:15. "Water as a river."-R.V. "To sweep her away with a flood."--Moffatt, Water, especially in the form of a river flooding its banks, is scripturally used to represent an invading army. See Isa. 8:7,8; Jer.46:7,8; 47:2,3. Toward the close of the Dark Ages, especially during the great Reformation, organized forces were sent against the church in the wilderness in a final effort to destroy the so-called "heretics". "When the holy Reformers began again to shake the torch of evangelic truth to light the nations to their salvation, the Vatican thundered with its bulls, armies rallied for the onslaught, and massacres and butcheries filled many lands with the blood of God's confessors, or lighted them with flames to consume the bodies of the saints."--Id. p. 314.

Bitter Persecution. "Even in the Albigensian war the success was indeed complete; heresy was crushed, but by means of which Innocent disapproved in his heart. He had let loose a terrible force, which he could neither arrest nor control. The Pope can do everything but show mercy or moderation....Heresy was quenched in blood; but the earth sooner or later gives out the terrible cry of blood for vengeance against murderers and oppressors."--"Historian's History of the World." Vol.8, p. 614. Had it not been for divine interference and assistance the entire church would have been annihilated as were the Huguenots of Paris on St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572.

The Church Helped. v. 16. This help at the time of the church's greatest need came from two sources. (1) The great Reformation shortened the days of persecution "for the elect's sake". Matt. 24:20,21. Princes and nations who welcomed the prospect of freedom from papal tyranny espoused the cause of the reformers and defended them from their foes. (2) The discovery of America came simultaneously with the Reformation and attracted the attention of many of the most bitter persecutors who turned to the New World for discovery and exploration. America not only swallowed up many of the enemies of the church but also provided a place of refuge for the seekers of freedom.

War on Remnant. v. 17. "This made the dragon furiously angry."-Wey. Because the dragon was thwarted in his plans to destroy the church because of the help that came from unexpected sources, Satan became furiously angry. For 1260 years "the saints of the most High" were "given into" the hands of the papal power with absolute dominion. None dared oppose the established order and there seemed to be no help for the persecuted church except that offered by the mountain fastnesses. In a final effort to exterminate "heresy", armies were sent after the "heretics". The wrath of the dragon power is stirred because his persecutions are "cut short" for "the elect's sake".

A New Battlefield. "Went away to make war."-R.V. "Went elsewhere."-Wey. "Went off to wage war on the rest of her offspring."-Moffatt. "Went away to make war on the remainder of her seed."-E.D. "And the dragon was angered at the woman and came away to do battle with the rest of her seed."-Concordant Version. It is very evident that after the dragon's defeat in Europe that the new seat of war would be transferred to a new battlefield. The first battlefield was in heaven around the throne of God where the dragon and his angels fought with Michael and His angels and were defeated and cast out. The second battlefield was in Palestine in Asia during the earthly visit of Michael as the "man child", where again the dragon suffered defeat. The center of the conflict during the third phase was in Europe during the Middle Ages while the church was in her wilderness refuge.

The Last War. In the last phase of the struggle before the close of probation the dragon "went away" or "went elsewhere" to attack the remnant of the woman's offspring or the last of God's children on earth. The last struggle over the possession of this earth will center in the New World or Protestant America. The first reason for this is because America became a new place of refuge for the pursued woman and many thousands of the most godly of the Old World came to the New where they could "establish a church without a Pope and a state without a king"; where they could worship God and educate their children according to the dictates of conscience. Satan went in pursuit of the woman to her new place of retreat and there the battle is renewed with still greater fury.

A New Nation. The second reason for Satan's enmity and transfer of the seat of war is because the refugees from oppressed Europe established in the New World the first truly Protestant nation with a complete separation of church and state. "Westward the course of empire takes its way....Time's noblest offspring is the last." The new nation founded on new principles of government became an asylum for the oppressed of all nations and to it came the most rugged, virtuous, pioneering, liberty-loving men and women of the European nations. Satan hates democracies which give to its citizens civil and religious liberty. All seven of his universal kingdoms through which he has ruled the world and persecuted the church have been absolute monarchies with a union of church and state. The nations of Europe soon began to follow the example of the U.S.

The establishing of the United States was a great blow to Satan's plans and therefore becomes the chief object of his attacks. If he can cause this new republic to repudiate its repudlican and Protestant principles he well knows that other nations will again follow her example and he can again lead the world back under his absolute dominion and oppression.

Birthplace of Final Message. The third reason for the wrath of the dragon and the new center of attack is because the final gospel message that is to bring God's people back to the faith and practice of the apostolic church and bring a repetition of Pentecostal power, was born in America and has its headquarters here. Here began the message that is belting the globe and revealing the long covered truth of the heavenly sanctuary and the meditorial services of Christ, and at the same time is exposing the false and counterfeit system of a human priesthood, human sacrifice, human Sabbath, and a human Saviour. During the Dark Ages of papal oppression the Two Witnesses had to do their teaching clothed in sackcloth. It is the message of the three angels of Rev. 14 that completely removed this dark cloak and again lightens the earth with the glory of gospel truth.

A Crushing Defeat. Satan's first defeat was by the mighty Michael. His second downfall was caused by the man child or the Lamb. After being thwarted in his attempts to destroy the woman, he suffers one of his most ignominious defeats at the hands of the children or remnant of the woman. The mighty dragon, the very symbol of strength, power, and cruelty, is overcome by the very symbols of physical weakness and timidity. The only weapon used is "the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony." Love and hatred meet in their greatest conflict and love conquers. A great "multitude which no man could number" come out of Satan's falst system, Babylon, and transfer their citizenship to the kingdom of God. "A firmament of chosen ones.. will shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law."--P.K. 189.

Satan Amazed. During the closing message especially under the latter rain, the following will be fulfilled: "The Lord Jesus is making experiments on human hearts through the exhibition of His mercy and abundant grace. He is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan, with all his triumphant boasting, with all his confederacy of evil united against God and the laws of His government, stand viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. They are to him an incomprehensible mystery....To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenus of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display....The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevain against."--T.M. 18. No wonder Satan is "furiously angry" with such a people.

The Remnant Identified. v. 17. Two prominent characteristics here identify the remnant and tell why Satan is especially angry with them. The first one is their obedience to the law or commandments of God. Obedience has always distinguished God's true people in this rebel world. Satan's followers are "the children of disobedience." Eph. 2:1. Obedience is the sign of sitizenship. Thus the three Hebrew worthies in Babylon showed their allegience to God by entering the fiery furnace rather than break God's law. Their course was approved of heaven as was Daniel's during a dimilar test later. See Dan. 3 and 6. Jesus made obedience the test of discipleship. John 14:15,21. The disciples declared it to be the evidence of love and acquaintance with God. Rom. 13:8-10; 1 John 2:3,4; 3:4,5; 5:2,3. Obedience to the entire law will especially distinguish the remnant. James 2:8-12; Rev. 14:6,7,12; 22:14.

War Against Law. "From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven, it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator; and though cast down, he has continued the same warfare upon the church....The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God."-G.C. 582. "God permitted him (Satan) to demonstrate the nature of his claims, to show the working out of his proposed changes in the divine law. His own work must condemn him....The whole universe must see the deceiver unmasked."--P.P. 42. The law-abiding remnant not only expose Satan before the universe but also call multitudes of his subjects out of Babylon into conformity to the law of the kingdom of heaven, the righteousness of Christ.

Testimony of Jesus. Defined in Rev, 19:10 as the spirit or gift of prophecy. The gift of prophecy is one of the gifts placed in the church by the Holy Spirit. See 1 Cor. 12:1,4-10,28. The entire Bible was written through the spirit of prophecy and is called the "testimony of Jesus" or the "spirit of prophecy". To "have" the "spirit of prophecy" means more than to merely possess the Scriptures for even the wicked have them or may have them in possession, It indicates the presence of the gift itself in their midst, for which cause Satan is angry.

Remnant Will Have Gift. 1 Cor. 1:6-8; Eph. 4:8,11-14; 1 Thes.5: 20-23. All these texts refer to a church waiting for the second advent. Satan has always been angry with God's prophets and those who follow their teachings. Through this gift the Lord has communicated His ~~will to His~~ people and also exposed the plans and deceptions of the enemy. See Matt. 5:12; Acts 7:51,52. Through this gift the Lord brings prosperity to His church and leads and preserves it from Satan's attacks. 2 Chron. 20:20; Hosea 12:13. The Exodus Movement was a type of the Advent Movement. 1 Cor. 10:1-11. By the gift of prophecy God's remnant people will be led and preserved. It makes Satan angry to have his plans revealed to the church. See 2 Kings 6:8-17. All of the attacks on the remnant and their message center on the law of God and especially the Sabbath, and the Spirit of Prophecy, or both.

Memory Text: Rev. 12:17.

THE BEAST WITH WORLD DOMINION

45

The Neglected Chapter. There is no part of the Revelation or the Bible that has been more neglected by professed Christians than Rev. 13. The only explanation is that its revelations are not agreeable to either Catholics or Protestants. The only reasonable interpretation places them in a very embarrassing position. "There are few chapters in the Bible which have been entirely passed over by Christian preachers as containing nothing that would edify and instruct men living in circumstances like our own. But this chapter seems to have been so dealt with....But this chapter has a meaning, and a momentous one, for the men of today."--Conway in "Pulpit Commentary".

Chapter Synopsis. Rev. 13:1-3. These verses give a prologue or summary of the entire chapter. The following verses present a detailed description of the activities of the beast and his allied powers against the church of Christ. The seven heads and ten horns identify this beast with the great red dragon of the previous chapter. It is the dragon or Satan who furnishes the beast with its power, throne, and great authority. Both have absolute dominion for 42 months or 1260 years during which time war is made on the saints of God. The beast, therefore, must represent another apocalyptic view of the government of Satan under a new phase of its existance.

World Dominion. In symbolic prophecy beasts that rise out of the sea represent world or universal powers. The seven heads as in the previous symbol indicate universal dominion as seven is the emblem of completeness. The ten horns represent all the nations of earth since the fall of imperial Rome. Thus the beast symbolizes plentitude of earthly power or all the forms of Satanic sovereignty. "The beast represents, not the Roman Empire merely, but the aggregate of the empires of this world as opposed to Christ and His kingdom."-Dean Alfred in "Speakers Commentary." "We have here a symbolic presentation of the political sovereignty of this world. The Beast has horns, and horns are the representatives of power. On these horns are diadems, and diadems are the badges of regal dominion....He is a monstrous Beast, including in his composition the four beasts of Daniel. He comes out of the same agitated sea, and behaves as they behaved.,,.The identification thus becomes complete and unmistakable, that this monstrous Beast is meant to set before us an image of earthly sovereignty and dominion."--"The Apocalypse" Seiss, Vol. 2, p. 391,

Combination Beast, v. 2, This verse shows the relation of this beast to the four beasts of Daniel seven. "Daniel's beasts were successive empires, the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Graeco-Macedonian, and the Roman. But the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the nameless ten-horned monster, each distinct there, are all united in one here. This Beast is therefore the consemmation and embodiment of the whole world-power or political dominion from the beginning....There is no political sovereignty on earth during its administration but that embraced in its horns and heads. It is therefore the whole sum of it as then existing."--Id. p. 392.

Seven World Powers. The seven heads represent seven phases of Satan's earthly rulership as the "prince of this world". Whatever power he wields he wields through the beast which includes all the "children of disobedience". "The seven heads may constitute in the vision a sevenfold succession of the world-empires of history each subject in its day to the suzerainty of the dragon."--"Revelation the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 227. "The seven heads denote the multiplication and succession of hostile powers arrayed against the church of God. Egypt and Assyria, Babylon and Persia, Greece and Rome, and by-and-by the final antichrist,--these may be the seven heads, But they are all successive heads of the same God-defying world.... Under all its forms it has hated the people of God. From Pharoah even to the last of the persecutors it has been the same. And in modern days, though in different ways, it has continued unchanged in spirit and aim."--Conway in "Pulpit Commentary".

Names of Blasphemy. "Names full of blasphemy"-Wey. "Blasphemous titles on his heads"--Moffatt. See verse 6. Blasphemy is defined as follows: "An indignity offered to God in words or writing: reproachful, contemptuous; anything which derogates from the perogatives of God."-Webster. "An offense against God and religion, either by impiously denying the Almighty, His existance or providence or by reproaches of Jesus Christ; or by profanely scoffing at Holy Scriptures, or exposing it to contempt or ridicule."--Blackstone. Each of the seven world empires represented by the seven heads was a combination of church and state. The ruler was also the Pontifex Maximus or supreme pontiff of the state religion. Pontiff comes from the word pons or pontis meaning bridge. He was the chief keeper of the bridge between heaven and earth. He claimed to be the vicar or vicegerent of God on earth. All of these religio-political rulers assumed titles that belong alone to God. The Roman emperor called himself "king of kings", "Divus", etc. Dynastic names identified kings with their gods. Pharoah is from the Hebrew "par-o" meaning "the sun", the chief god of the Egyptians. All these rulers denied the Creator and worshiped the creature. They exalted self above God. Ex. 5:2; 2 Kings 18. Every name by which the creature usurps the place of the Creator is a name of blasphemy. All seven of these kingdoms were controlled by false religions.

Beast Under Papal Head. Rev. 13 pictures Satan's kingdom under the seventh phase or the papal dominion. The papal religion is a combination of the religious systems of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome. The papal government is also patterned after the governments of these world empires, all of which were absolute monarchies. Satan as the "prince of this world" furnished all these powers their throne and authority as he also does the papacy. "And it was to the dragon that he owed his power, and his throne, and his wide dominion."-Wey. "To him the dragon gave his own power and his own throne and great authority." -Moffatt. Satan told Christ that he had the right to give the throne or rulership of this world to whomsoever he willed. Luke 4:6. He has given it in turn to seven world powers.

Satan's Throne. Rev. 2:13. "Satan's throne is there"-Wey. "Where God's throne should have been, Satan has placed his throne. The world laid its homage, as a willing offering, at the feet of the enemy."-Vol. 6:236. Therefore Satan can give his throne to any power he may choose as an instrument through which he can rule the world. Through the cross Christ wins back the throne of this world. "Christ says: 'Where Satan has set his throne, there shall stand My cross. Satan shall be cast out, and I will be lifted up to draw all unto Me. I will become the center of the redeemed world."--Id. p. 237.

Throne Given Papacy. "Long ages ago, when Rome through the neglect of the Western emperors was left to the mercy of the barbarous hordes, the Roman turned to one figure for aid and protection, and asked him to rule them; and thus, in this simple manner, the best title of all to kingly right, commenced the temporal sovereignty of the popes. And meekly stepping to the throne of Caesar, the vicar of Christ took up the septer to which the emperors and kings of Europe were to bow in reverance through so many ages."--James P. Conroy, in "American Catholic Quarterly Review", April, 1911.

Great Authority. How great? v. 4-8. "They worshiped the dragon because he gave his power to the beast."-R.V. "And they offered worship to the dragon, because it was to him that the Wild Beast owed his dominion."-Wey. To worship the beast is to worship the dragon or Satan, the real ruler. It is his spirit that controls all "the children of disobedience". Worship is defined in Rom. 6:16. Obedience to any power antagonistic to God is obedience to Satan, and therefore the worship of Satan.

Satanic Control. v. 5. "There was given unto him." Who gave him the power to speak blasphemies and continue 42 months? Verse 2; Dan. 8:24. "Empowered to work its will for 42 months."-20th C.N.T. "And to it was given authority to do what it wills forty-two months."-Concordant Version. Satan gave the power but permission to exercise that power must be granted by the Lord who is "the Prince over the kings of the earth". "Liberty of action was granted him for 42 months."-Wey. "He was allowed to utter loud and blasphemous vaunts and allowed to exercise authority for forty and two months."-Moffatt. Satan can only act by permission of a higher power. See verse 7. "And permission was given him to make war upon God's people and conquer them; and power was given him, etc."-Wey. See also Dan 7:25. 42 months, 1260 days, or a time, times and half a time represent the same, the 1260 years of papal supremacy from 538 to 1798.

Blasphemous Power, v. 5,6. "He spake proudly and blasphemously"-20th C.N.T. See Dan. 7,8,20,25; 8:11,12; 11:31,36; 2 Thes. 2:3,4. "The Pope alone is called most holy,...divine monarch, and supreme emperor and king of kings....The Pope is of so great dignity and power that he constitutes one and the same tribunal with Christ, so that whatsoever the Pope does seems to proceed from the mouth of God....The Pope is as God on earth." --Pope Boniface VIII. Quoted by Guinness in "Romanism and the Reformation."

"All the names which are attributed to Christ in Scripture, applying to His supremacy over the church, are also attributed to the Pope."--Cardinal Bellarmine, "On the Authority of the Councils," Vol. 2, p. 17.

Blaspheme His Tabernacle. v. 6. "His name and His dwelling place"-Wey. "Those who dwell in His tabernacle in heaven."-20th C.N.T. See Dan. 8:10-14. The papacy took away the priesthood of Christ and instituted in its place a false meditorial system called "the abomination of desolation". Thus they polluted God's sanctuary and cast it to the ground. They assumed perogatives that belong alone to Christ. "I never invite an angel down from heaven to hear mass here. This is not the place for angels. The only person in heaven I ever ask to come down here is Jesus Christ, and Him I command to come down. He has to come when I bid Him. I took bread in my fingers this morning and said: 'This is the body and blood of Jesus Christ,' and He had to come down. This is one of the things He must do. He must come down every time I say mass at my bidding....I do it in obedience, reverence, homage, and adoration, but I do it, and when I do it, Christ must obey."--"Western Watchman", June 10, 1915. Report of sermon by Rev. D. S. Phelan.

Universal Worship. v. 8. "And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain."-R.V. This is in harmony with Rev. 17:8. All the wicked from the foundation of the world or "since the disruption of the world" (Concordant Version) have worshiped the beast. This is further proof that the beast in its entirety embraces the history of the reign of sin. There is no middle ground. All who are not citizens of the kingdom of God and worshipers of the Creator are embraced in the beast and are worshipers of the beast.

The Book of Life. The book of life of the Lamb contains the roll of the citizens of His kingdom; the members of His family; the membership of His church. Heb. 12:22,23. They were all chosen in Christ from the beginning and doubtless their character names written in the book of life. See Eph. 1:4-6. Through redemption God's original plan for man and the world will be carried out. He foresaw the fall and ordained a remedy. Redemption was no after thought with God but a part of the divine plan or provision. Jesus was the "Lamb who has been offered in sacrifice ever since the creation of the world." --Wey.

Beast Identified. v. 18. "The number indicates a man's name."-20th C.N.T. "It indicates a certain man, and his number is 666."--Wey. "The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number."--Douay, Footnote. The text indicates that a man stands at the head of the beast power with an official title indicative of his office and character, and that the numeral letters in that title make the sum of 666. It was the custom among Roman soldiers to find the sum of the numeral letters composing their names. Soldiers and slaves were thus numbered as well as named.

Official Title. "The pope is the vicar of Christ, the successor of St. Peter, and the visible head of the church."--"Manual of Christian Doctrine", John Joseph McVey, p. 123. Published in Philadelphia in 1914.

"The title 'pope', once used with far greater latitude, is at present employed solely to denote the Bishop of Rome, who, in virtue of his position as successor of St. Peter, is the chief pastor of the whole church, the vicar of Christ upon earth."--"The Catholic Encyclopedia", Vol. XII, p. 260.

"The letters inscribed in the pope's miter are these: 'Vicarius Filii Dei', which is the Latin for 'Vicar of the Son of God'. Catholics hold that the church, which is a visible society, must have a visible head....Hence to the Bishop of Rome, as head of the church, was given the title, 'Vicar of Christ'".--"Our Sunday Visitor", Huntington, Indiana. April 18, 1915.

Number of Beast. "The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number."-Douay. Since the Papacy is a Roman or Latin power and Latin is the official language, the number should be made up from the numeral letters of his Latin title, which is, "VICARIUS FILII DEI". Reduced to Roman numerals this name or title makes up the number 666. Thus the identification of the beast under the seventh head is established. No wonder the prophet saw the heads "full of names of blasphemy", or with "blasphemous titles on his heads".--Moffatt. The papacy alone of all modern powers fits the prophetic mold of the beast under its seventh and last dominion.

Memory Text: Rev. 13:8.

THE HEAD WOUNDED AND HEALED

46

The Deadly Wound. Rev. 13:3. "As though it had been smitten unto death."-R.V. "Looked as if it had been slain and killed."-Moffatt. "I saw that one of his heads seemed to have been mortally wounded."-Wey. The wound was not mortal or fatal but seemed to be. The head recovered from the wound and was completely healed. The wounding takes place after the beast has exercised great power and authority over the nations for 42 months. Prophecy indicates a curbing of papal power at the end of the 1260 years which could only come through a mortal wound. His absolute power was to continue only "until" the end of the prophetic period allotted to his absolute rule. See Dan. 7:25.

The Papal Head. The papal power is the only one of the seven that ever came back after being overthrown. Rev. 13 can apply to no other than the papacy which is the last of the seven heads. Satan's last rulership of the world is through the papacy both before the wounding and after the healing of the last head of his earthly kingdom. "This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the 'man of sin' foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan's power,--a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will."--G.C. 50. "As we approach the last crisis, it is of vital moment that harmony and unity exist among the Lord's instrumentalities. The world is filled with storm and war and variance. Yet under one head,--the papal power,--the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate."--Vol. 7:182.

Weapons Used. v. 9,10. "If any man is for captivity, into captivity he goes."-R.V. "Will eventually be killed with the sword."-20th C.N.T. The papal head was to be wounded by the very weapons used to persecute and destroy the saints. Rev.11:3,5. "In like manner" the destroyers of the martyrs are to be killed. The papal weapons are mentioned in Dan. 11:33 as the sword, flame, captivity and spoil. The same power that led millions into captivity during the dark ages is to go into captivity; the spoiler is to be spoiled; the desolator is to be made desolate; the user of fire is to be burned; the wielder of the bloody sword must be mortally wounded that the gospel may do its work.

Claim Right to Use Sword. Augustine advocated the death penalty for heretics as did also Thomas Aquinas. Pope Pius IV in 1562 promised a reward of 300 pounds to anyone killing a Protestant refugee. The Pope sent the Duke of Alva a jeweled hat and sword for executing 18,000 heretics. In the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572, Pope Pius V wrote Count Santifiore: "Take no Huguenot prisoner, kill every one that falls into your hands." Catholics have never denied the right to use the sword of the state to punish heretics or that they have used it in the past when occasion demanded it.

Catholic Authority. The church may by divine right "confiscate the property of heretics, imprison their persons, and condemn them to the flames....In our age the right to inflict the severest penalties, even death, belongs to the church...since experience teaches us that there is no other remedy....The last recourse is the death penalty....There is no graver offense than heresy ...and therefore it must be rooted out with fire and sword. It is a Catholic tenet which must be faithfully held, that the extreme penalty not only may, but must, be inflicted on obstinate heretics."--"Institutes of Public Ecclesiastical Law", Vol. 2, p. 142. Standard Catholic Work published in 1901.

The Dragon Spirit. "Our heroes are the Duke of Alva and Catherine de Medici. They knew the Huguenots, and they drove them off the continent. You cannot excite any pity in our souls by whining accounts of Catholic atrocities in the 17th century. We have never written a line in extenuation or palliation of the Inquisition. We never thought it needed a defense."--"The Western Watchman" (Catholic), Nov. 21, 1912. "Protestantism--we would draw and quarter it. We would impale it and hang it up for crows to eat. We would tear it with molten lead, and sink it in a hundred fathoms of hell fire."--Id. Dec. 24, 1908.

The Tables Turned. Rev. 18:6,7. "The example of persecution which the clergy of France had exhibited for so many ages, was now retorted upon them with signal vigor. The scaffolds ran red with the blood of priests. The galleys and the prisons, once crowded with Huguenots, were now filled with their persecutors. Chained to the bench and toiling at the oar, the Roman Catholic clergy experienced all those woes which their church had so freely inflicted on the gentle heretics."--G.C. 283. See "The Papal Drama", book 10; "The Church and the French Revolution", book 3, chap. 1.

Chief Weapon Against Rome. While the sword of the state played its part in the infliction of the deadly wound, the chief weapon used was the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. Luther said, "I set the word of God to running to and fro in the earth and kingdoms fell and thrones trembled." During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Scriptures liberated the world from papal oppression and made possible civil and religious liberty. "He (Wycliffe) lived to place in the hands of his countrymen the most powerful of all weapons against Rome,--to give them the Bible, the Heaven-appointed agent to liberate, enlighten, and evangelize the people.... In giving the Bible to his countrymen he had done more to break the fetters of ignorance and vice, more to liberate and elevate his country, than was ever achieved by the most brillant victories on fields of battle."--G.C. 88. Spiritual weapons are the mightiest of all. See 2 Cor. 10:3-5. The same mighty two-edged sword will finally slay the beast and all the wicked. Rev. 19:15,16. The beast that had led millions captive will go into its final captivity and into the lake of fire. Rev. 19:20. "And the beast was captured."-Wey. Also 20:7-10.

Final Sword Stroke. The final stroke of the sword which was made possible by the Reformation, was wielded by Napoleon through General Berthier in 1798 when the pope was captured and imprisoned and lost his temporal dominion. All Europe thought the papacy was dead. "The Papacy was extinct; not a vestige of its existance remained; and among all the Roman Catholic powers not a finger was stirred in its defense. The Eternal City had no longer prince or pontiff; its bishop was a dying captive in foreign lands; and the decree was already announced that no successor would be allowed in his place."--"Rome and Its Papal Rulers", George Trevor, Canon of York, p. 440. No wonder the prophet thought it was a mortal wound. "Seemed to have been mortally wounded."-Wey. "Looked as if it had been slain and killed."--Moffatt.

Thought Papacy Dead. "When in 1797, Pope Pius VI fell grievously ill, Napoleon gave orders that in the event of his death no successor should be elected to his office, and that the Papacy should be discontinued. But the Pope recovered. The peace was soon broken: Berthier entered Rome on the tenth of February, 1798, and proclaimed a republic. The aged Pontiff refused to violate his oath by recognizing it, and was hurried from prison to prison in France. Broken with fatigue and sorrows, he died on the 17th of August, 1799, in the French fortress of Valence, aged 82 years. No wonder that half of Europe thought Napoleon's veto would be obeyed, and that with the Pope the Papacy was dead."---"The Modern Papacy", Joseph Rickaby, p. 1. Published in London by the Catholic Truth Society.

An Amazing Recovery. v. 3. "But his mortal wound was healed, and the whole world was amazed and followed him."-Wey. James Russell Lowell while ambassador to England between 1880 and 1885, wrote while traveling in Italy: "But I am more and more persuaded every day that, as far as the popular mind is concerned, Romanism is a dead thing in Italy. It survives only because there is nothing else to replace it with....It is literally a superstition--a something left to stand over till the great commercial spirit of the 19th centure balances his accounts again, and then it will be banished to the limbo of profits and loss." Arthur Brisbane after quoting Lowell's statement said: "But it's the 19th century that is dead and buried. The papacy is more active and powerful than ever it was in Lowell's day. It isn't safe to prophecy unless you are inspired."

The Wound Healed. The healing process began immediately after the wounding. In the year 1800 Napoleon's edict was ignored by the election of a new pope. The papacy has been gradually but surely recovering ever since with ever increasing speed. Healing is a gradual process but when finished the restoration is complete. The recovery has been especially rapid since the great war. In 1914 there were 14 nations with accredited representatives at the Vatican. The number now is more than 35 with Russia and the United States the only great nations outside the papal diplomatic fold.

Catholic Growth. One out of every four ministers of the church of England is in favor of and is openly working for reunion with the Roman Catholic church. The Roman Catholic mass is celebrated each Sunday on more than 1000 altars of the Anglican church of England. It is estimated that there are 4,000,000 Catholics in China, 3,000,000 in India, and 3,000,000 in Africa. In 1790 only.78 per cent of the population of the United States was Catholic. In 1920 it was 18.76 per cent. In 1808 there was only one bishop in the U. S. and he was the highest official of the church. In 1930 there was one apostolic delegate, four cardinals, 15 archbishops, 102 bishops, 26,925 priests, 20,078,202 members, and 135 Theological Seminaries. See Catholic Year Book for 1930. The noted Catholic writer, Jean Carrere, declares: "The church at this moment is stronger than she has ever been."--"The Pope", p 245.

Important Event. Feb. 11, 1929 is doubtless the most important date and represents the most important event thus far in the healing of the deadly wound. On that date the Concordat was signed by representatives of the Vatican and the Italian government ending a virtual war that has been going on between them since 1870. It also restored the temporal sovereignty of the Pope. He is now king of a state as well as chief pontiff of a church. The next morning when the Pope appeared on the balcony of St. Peters thousands of Catholics led by the priests cried out: "Long live the Pope-King." A dispatch from Rome telling of the signing of the agreement said: "In affixing the autographs to the memorable document, healing the wound which has festered since 1870, extreme cordiality was displayed on both sides."--Los Angeles Times, Feb. 12, 1929. Pope Pius declared that the Concordat assures him of "real, proper, and absolute sovereignty, which was evidently due to him who, for divine reasons, and by divine mandate, cannot be the subject of any temporal power."--Id.

Lincoln's Prophecy. "I do not pretent to be a prophet. But though not a prophet, I see a very dark cloud on our horizon and that dark cloud is coming from Rome. It is filled with tears of blood. It will rise and increase, till its flanks will be torn by a flash of lightning followed by a fearful peal of thunder. Then a cyclone such as the world has never seen, will pass over this country, spreading ruin and desolation from North to South. After it is over there will be long days of peace and prosperity; for popery, with its Jesuits and merciless Inquisition, will have been forever swept away from our country. Neither I, nor you, but our children will see those things."-- ""Fifty Years in the Church of Rome", by Father Chiniquy, p. 715. Published in 1886.

Spirit of Prophecy. "Throughout the land the papacy is piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions are to be repeated."--Vol.5:449. "Many will plead that there is no prospect that papery will ever be revived. If it shall regain its lost ascendancy it will be by Protestantism giving it the right hand of fellowship. But there is nothing in Scripture to assure us against the reinstatement of popery."--R.H. Jan. 1, 1889.

Papacy Unchanged. Amid the continual changes in human institutions she is the one Institution that never changes. Amid the universal ruins of earthly monuments she is the one monument that stands proudly pre-eminent. Not a stone in this building falls to the ground. Amid the general destruction of kingdoms her kingdom is never destroyed. Ever ancient and ever new, time writes no wrinkles on her Divine brow. The Church has seen the birth of every government of Europe, and it is not at all improbable that she shall also witness the death of them all and chant their requiem."--"Faith of Our Fathers", Cardinal Gibbons, p. 60.

Ever Victorious, v. 4. "Who is able to make war with him?", is the question asked. "I would now ask this question of all that are hostile to the Catholic Church and that are plotting her destruction: How can you hope to overturn an institution which for more than eighteen centuries has successfully resisted all the combined assaults of the world, of men, and of the powers of darkness? What means will you employ to encompass her ruin? Is it the power of Kings, and Emperors, and Prime Ministers? They have tried in vain to crush her, from the days of the Roman Caesars."--Id. p. 56.

A Modern Challenge. "During the two thousand years the Church has been on this earth, she was warred with nearly every government in the world. Where are they today? You can read about them in history. The world is full of their ruins. Their thrones have toppled over and fallen, their dynasties have come to dust. And the governments of the world today will meet the same fate if they challenge the hostility of the Church of God. She remains; she is today what she was two thousand years ago; she is today what she was in the days of Justinian the Great; she is today what she was in the days of Barbarossa; she is today what she was during the Middle Ages; she is today what she was during the times of Protestant persecution, during and since the sixteenth century; she is the same invincible Church of God. God help the state that attacks her; God help the king that provokes her hostility."--From a sermon preached on Sunday, Dec. 12, 1909, by Rev. D. S. Phelan, LL. D., printed in the "Western Watchman", Dec. 16, 1909.

The Divine Decree. Rev. 18:7,8. How could the boastings of these papal writers be more accurately foretold? But the Supreme Court of Heaven has rendered sentence against the papal abomination and that sentence will be fully executed. See Dan. 7:11,25,26; 8:25; 9:27; 11:36,45. There is one power that is able to make war on the beast. It was the power of the Almighty that wounded the papal head during the Protestant Reformation. The same omnipotent power will finally capture the beast and cast it alive into the lake of fire. Rev. 19:20.

Memory Text: Rev. 13:3.

THE FALSE PROPHET

47

Another Beast. Rev. 13:11-14. The second beast of this prophecy is similar in character and does a similar work to the first beast under the head that was wounded and healed. After the second arises, Both beasts exist at the same time and continue to the end and are cast alive into the lake of fire. Rev.19:20. The second beast works miracles before the first by which the whole world is deceived into making an image to the beast and enforcing its worship. The first beast is the chief object of worship to the end. v. 8,12. Therefore the two-horned beast cannot be the seventh head of the seven-headed and ten-horned beast representing Satan's kingdom.

Called the False Prophet. Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10. There can be no question regarding the identity of the false prophet as the two-horned beast. In Rev. 19;20 the false prophet is said to be the power "that wrought miracles before" the beast. "Who performed the marvels before the eyes of the beast, with which he deceived those who had the mark of the beast."-20th C.N.T. The same statements are made regarding the two-horned beast of the 13th chapter. See v. 12-14. "And he exerciseth all the authority of the first beast in his sight."-R.V. "In consequence of the marvels which it was allowed to perform under the eyes of the beast, it is able to deceive all who are living on the earth."-20th C.N.T.

Further Proof, Uriah Smith after quoting verse 14 says: "This identifies the two-horned beast with the false prophet of Rev. 19:20; for this false prophet is the power that works miracles before the beast, 'with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image',---the identical work of the two-horned beast. We can now ascertain by what means the miracles in question are wrought; for Rev.16:13, 14 speaks of spirits of devils working miracles...and these miracle-working spirits go forth out of the mouths of certain powers, one of which is this very false prophet, or two-horned beast."--"Daniel and the Revelation", p. 584. Commenting on Rev. 19:20 the same author says: "The false prophet is the one that works miracles before the beast. This proves him to be identical with the two-horned beast of chapter 13, to whom the same work, for the very same purpose, is there attributed."--Id. p. 730.

Apostate Protestantism. Seventh-day Adventists have always held that the false prophet, which is the two-horned beast, is symbolic primarily of false, backslidden, and apostate Protestantism. "Paganism (the dragon), the papacy (the beast), and fallen Protestantism (the false prophet), join hands."--"The Story of the Seer of Patmos", Haskell, p. 283. Commenting on Rev. 16:13 Uriah Smith says: "The sources from which these spirits issue, denote that they will work among the three great religious divisions of mankind, represented by the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, or Paganism, Catholicism, and apostate Protestantism."--"Daniel and the Revelation", p. 694.

False Religious System. A prophet is a religious and not a civil officer or leader. A true prophet is God's spokesman to His church and would therefore be a fit symbol of Christianity. A false prophet on the other hand is Satan's mouthpiece and would appropriately represent a false and counterfeit system of religion. The term "false prophet" could not in a primary sense represent a civil power. This could be true only in a secondary sense as the false religion gets control of and speaks and works through a civil government. The working of miracles has always been one of the chief characteristics of prophets both true and false. Miracles to deceive have never been performed by civil governments as such. They can only be the product of false religions and their leaders. The miracles performed by the two-horned beast or false prophet identify it primarily as a religious rather than a civil power. See Matt.24:24; 7:21-23; 2 Thes. 2:9-13. These are the same miracles as pictured in Revelation and are performed by false religionists.

Spirit of Prophecy. "The churches, represented by Babylon, are represented as having fallen from their spiritual state to become a persecurint power against those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. To join this persecuting power is represented as having two horns like a lamb, but as speaking as a dragon."--T.M. 117.

"Prophecy represents Protestantism as having lamb-like horns, but speaking like a dragon. Already we are beginning to hear the voice of the dragon....The National Reform Movement...will manifest the same oppression, haughtiness, arrogance, and intolerance which have prevailed in past ages. The powers of human councils then assume the perogatives of Deity, crushing under their despotic will, liberty of conscience and the right of individual responsibility."--R.H. Jan. 1, 1889. See also Vol. 9:229.

A Persecuting Power. The two-horned beast persecuted the people of God which also identifies it primatily as a religious system. "Who or what is it that persecutes the true church?--It is a false or apostate church. What is it that is ever warring against true religion?--It is a false and counterfeit religion. Who ever heard of the civil power, merely, of any nation, persecuting the people of God? Governments may war against other governments, to avenge some wrong, real or imaginary, or to acquire territory and extend their power, as nations have often warred against the Jews; but governments do not persecute (mark the word--do not persecute) people on account of their religion, unless under the control of some opposite and hostile system of religion. But the powers introduced in this prophecy,--the dragon, the leopard beast, and the two-horned beast,--are all persecuting powers. They are actuated by rage and enmity against the people and church of God. And this fact is of itself sufficiently conclusive evidence that in each of these powers the ecclesiastical or religious element is the controlling power."--"Daniel and the Revelation," Smith, p. 560. This is a very clear setting forth of the fact that in the primary sense the false prophet or two-horned beast is false Protestantism which persecutes through the civil power.

Relation to America. Just as Protestantism ripened to its most noble fruitage in the United States, the only truly Protestant nation on earth, just so the apostasy of Protestantism also reaches its height in America. "America is the home of Protestantism"--S.N. Haskell. Protestantism and the United States are inseparable and therefore in a secondary sense the symbol of the two-horned beast is sometimes applied to the United States in Smith's "Daniel and the Revelation" and "The Great Controversy". Most of the atatements however indicate clearly that the religious element is the primal factor.

Protestants of America. "The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of Spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience."--G.C. 588.

"When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and Republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan, and that the end is near."--Vol. 5:451.

Further Statements. "When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result."--G.C. 445.

"The enforcement of Sunday-keeping on the part of Protestant churches is an enforcement of the worship of the papacy--of the beast....In the very act of enforcing a religious duty by secular power, the churches would themselves form an image to the beast; hence the enforcement of Sunday-keeping in the United States would be an enforcement of the worship of the beast and his image."--G.C. 449. In Rev. 13 it is clearly stated that it is the two-horned beast that compels the worship of the beast.

Church Controls State. v. 14. It is evident from past experience that the government will never demand a union of church and state; the pressure for such a move comes from the religious element in the nation. "Let the principle once be established in the United States, that the church may employ or control the power of the state; that religious observances may be enforced by secular laws; in short, that the authority of the church and state is to dominate the conscience, and the triumph of Rome in this country is assured."--G.C. 581. The church is always described as the prime factor in the movement.

The Two Beasts. The two symbolic beasts of Rev. 13 represent the two forms of apostate Christianity that dominate the Old and New world and their civil powers. "Romanism in the Old World, and apostate Protestantism in the New, will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble."--G.C. 616. Union with civil power is a chief characteristic of false religion. "The dragon, pagan Rome, and the leopard beast, papal Rome, present before us great organizations standing as the representatives of two great systems of false religion. Analogy would seem to require that the remaining symbol, the two-horned beast, have a similar application, and find its fulfillment in some nationality which is the representative of still another great system of religion. But the only remaining system which is exercising a controlling influence in the world today is Protestantism."--"Daniel and the Revelation", Smith, p. 565.

Out of the Earth. While in Dan. 7:3,17, the "sea" and "earth" represent the same, in this case the "earth" doubtless has special reference to the New World as the first beast came up out of the "sea". The Papacy arose among the nations of the Old World and then dominated them. Protestantism in its purest state arose in the New World in connection with the United States and is destined to control and persecure through the nation that protected and fostered it. Protestantism was the power in the hand of God that wounded the papal head of the beast, and at the very time the first beast was being wounded and led into captivity, the Protestant beast was coming into power. The chief weapon in the wounding of the papal head was the Sword of the Spirit during the Reformation.

Two Horns Like a Lamb. The two lamb-like horns are said to represent civil and religious liberty, two of the foundation principles of Protestantism and Protestant nations. Also, "The two horns represent the two foundation principles of the government, Protestantism and Republicanism."--"The Story of the Seer of Patmos", Haskell, p. 238. Or as horns in other symbolic prophecies represent nations it may be that these symbolize England and the United States, the two leading Protestant and Republican nations especially of the New World.

The Dragon's Voice. Protestantism which was the mouthpiece of God during the Reformation becomes the spokesman of the dragon and is controled by the dragon spirit which had control of the first beast. Rev. 13:2,11,12. "The same spirit which actuated papists in ages past, will lead Protestants to pursue a similar course toward those who will maintain their loyalty to God. Church and state are now making preparations for the future conflict. Protestants are working disguise to bring Sunday to the front, as did the Romanists."--Vol. 5:449. Satan has always ruled the nations of earth and persecuted the people of God through false religions. Through his church he speaks to the world and demands allegience and worship.

A World Movement. v. 12. "Causes the earth and its inhabitants"--Wey. "It makes the earth and all who are living on it."-20th C.N.T. The activities of the two-horned beast are world-wide and cannot be confined to a single nation. The false prophet is a world power and speaks with authority to all men and nations. It is as universal as the first beast. Prophecy forbids that any civil power shall ever again dictate to the whole world. Protestantism is a world power and will unite with the papacy in influencing the nations to destroy the loyal people of God. "As the decree issued by the various rulers of Christendom against commandment-keepers shall withdraw the protection of government, and abandon them to those who desire their destruction...there will be in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction."--G.C.626,635.

A World Message. The warning against the beast, his image, and his mark, is a world message. Only on the basis of the two-horned beast or false prophet being primarily apostate Protestantism, and only secondarily the United States, can the warning apply to all peoples and nations. From this viewpoint only can this prophecy be explained in many nations who would resent the teaching that the United States as a nation will dictate to the world. The broader view presented in this lesson is appropriate anywhere in the world where the warning against the beast can be given.

Deceived by Miracles. v. 13, 14. Dean Stanley in his book, "Sinai and Palestine", pp. 464-470, describes the farse of the calling of fire down from heaven each year at Easter time by the Greek patriarch at Jerusalem. By this fire the Greek churches and shrines are lighted for the year. In past ages the calling of fire from heaven was a sign of God's power and approval. See Lev. 9:24; Judges 13:19,20; 1 Kings 18. Satan cannot perform a genuine miracle but must perform his "lying wonders" within the realm of natural law. 2 Thes. 2:9-12. "He has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature, and he uses all his power to control the elements as far as God allows."--G.C. 589.

Marvels of Science. Archdeacon Lee believes that this prophecy will be largely fulfilled by the wonders of science which so often leads men away from God to the worship of self and the exaltation of the creature above the Creator. The United States is the leading nation in the discoveries of science. Edison and others have actually called fire down out of the skies. The wonders of science virtually made him a sceptic. The same was true of Burbank and other great scientists. The world today is rejecting God and in this apostasy "science falsely so-called" is playing the leading role.

The Final Deception. "And while those devoted to these sciences laud them to the heavens, because of the great and good works wrought by them, they are cherishing and glorifying Satan himself, who steps in and works with all power and signs and lying wonders--with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.... This entering in of Satan through the sciences, is well devised by his Satanic majesty, and will eventually root out of the minds of thousands true faith in Christ's being the Messiah, the Son of God."--"Spiritual Gifts", Vol. 4, part 2, p. 81. Also Vol.1:291.

Memory Text: Rev. 13:11.

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST
48

Message of False Prophet. Rev. 13:11,14,15. The two-horned beast or false prophet proclaims a world message "telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast."--Emphatic Diaglott. "He bids the dwellers on the earth."--Moffatt. An image is a "copy, semblance, or likeness" of the original. The beast is a world organization which the two-horned beast "causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship." The image is made by "them that dwell on the earth" and is therefore also world-wide in its power and authority. In their broadest scope all the symbols of this chapter are world-embracing.

Formation of the Beast. The beast was formed as the result of the "falling away" or the apostasy of the early church. A series of great church councils united Christendom under one head and led to a union with the state. "Then to learn what the image is like, and how it is to be formed, we must study the characteristics of the beast itself,--the papacy. When the early church became corrupted by departing from the simplicity of the gospel and accepting heathen rites and customs, she lost the Spirit and power of God; and in order to control the consciences of the people, she sought the support of the secular power. The result was the papacy, a church that controlled the power of the state, and employed it to further her own ends, especially for the punishment of 'heresy'."--G.C. 443.

Formation of Image. "When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result....The image to the beast represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas."--G.C. 445. The same steps that formed the beast will lead to the making of the image.

Great Church Trust. The Protestant churches, especially of America are rapidly uniting under the leadership of the "National Reform Association", "The Lord's Day Alliance", and other national and international organizations. Charles Beecher, speaking years ago of the trend of Protestantism towards Rome, said: "Was not this the way things went with Rome? Are we not living her life over again? And what do we see just ahead? Another general council! A world's convention! Evangelical alliance, and universal creed!"--Sermon on "The Bible a Sufficient Creed," delivered at Fort Wayne, Ind., Feb. 22, 1846. Since then tremendous strides have been taken towards the fulfillment of this prophecy. The alliance of the Protestant churches for political ends is practically an assured fact. As soon as the state yields to the pressure and begins to use its power to enforce the dogmas of the church, the image becomes a living, persecuting reality.

Ceased to Protest. Protestantism as a name had its origin April 25, 1529, when Martin Luther and his colleagues, composed of two electors, several princes, and the representatives of fourteen imperial cities, protested against the decree of Charles V and the decision of the Diet of Spires. Because of this protest they were called Protestants and later all who espoused the cause of the Reformation were so called. The movement soon broadened into a protest against many of the doctrines and practices of the church of Rome. All Christians who do not adhere to the Greek or Roman Catholic beliefs are called Protestants. Protestants have long ceased to protest and every year are getting on friendlier terms with Rome.

Protestantism Dying. A recent article in the "Current History Magazine" was entitled, "Is Protestantism Dying in Europe?" It declared that 88 Protestant institutions had closed in one year in Germany while during the "five years leading up to that period the Catholic church opened 700 institutions." During the past century more than 800 ministers of the church of England and 500 Protestant ministers of the United States have become Catholic priests. One writer speaks of the movement as "a rush to get into the Catholic fold." Mr. G.K. Chesterton recently said: "A bloodless revolution is on in the returning of Protestant England to the Roman Catholic faith."

Virtually Dead. Christ's message to apostate Protestantism is; "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."-Rev. 3:1. "You are supposed to be alive, but in reality you are dead."-Wey. Protestantism is living on a past reputation when her name meant life. Life is gone and only the name remains. Mr. G.K. Chesterton, the famous British Essayest, speaking at a Catholic congress at Birmington, England, in1923, said: "The non-Roman Catholic churches are extinct and defunct. The Established church is a lie....The Reformation is wiped out....If the quarrel between the Pope and Luther were to take place today, the whole of the modern world would be on the side of the Pope." --"Public Opinion", Aug. 17,1923.

Romeward Bound. Pope Pius XI recently issued a communique rejoicing over the "decline" of Protestantism, describing it as becoming "more and more exhausted" until "Its own very sterility is inspiring many souls with a nostalgia (homesickness) for Catholicism." Reported in the "Signs of the Times", Jan. 28,1930. The drift Romeward is especially significant in the two greatest Protestant nations of earth, England and the United States. "The visit of King George of England to Pope Pius on May 9 (1923) was an event of more than usual significance. It marked a precedent so far as England under Protestant rule is concerned. It was the first official visit of a reigning monarch of England to the head of the Catholic church since Canute, the Danish ruler of Anglo-Saxon England visited Pope John XIX in 1027."--"America" (Catholic), June 2, 1923. Protestants are healing the very wound they once inflicted. The false prophet heals the deadly wound and then compels the world to worship the restored papal power.

Drift in America. "The Holy Father appeals to this country for comfort and support. And he appeals not in vain. American shoulders are today holding up the Vatican. Its revenues are largely derived from this country; and what is now a steady stream will soon be an on-flowing river."--"The Western Watchman." Oct. 29, 1908. In 31 of the 48 states, the Roman Catholic church is the leading denomination. The Catholic population of the United States has increased from, one to every 120 in 1776, to one to every six in 1930. They now publish 200 periodicals in this country in the England language and 100 in foreign tongues. New York next to Rome is the strongest Catholic center on earth. The church owns $100,000,000 worth of property in the District of Columbia and pays taxes on $246,666 worth. The National Catholic Welfare Council recently said: "The Universal Church now looks to America to be the leader of all things Catholic."

Wayward Daughters. The Catholic church terms itself "The Mother Church of Christendom", and considers the Protestant churches as wayward and disobedient daughters. She has always entertained the hope that some day these truant children would return to the Catholic fold. On Dec. 26, 1931, Pope Pius XI issued a 7500 word encyclical urging that Protestant and Greek Catholic churches unite under papal leadership. He said: "We are confident that they, becoming convinced by history, life's teacher, will be able to feel at least a longing for one fold under one shepherd and for a return to that true faith which is jealously conserved, ever secure, and inviolate in the Roman church. We recall to those who govern flocks separated from us that the faith which their ancestors solemnly professed at the Council of Ephesus, is conserved unchanged and is strenuously defended, at present, as in the past, by this supreme cathedral of truth."--Reported in the "Los Angeles Times", Dec. 27, 1931.

Welcome Assured. A few years ago a delegation of Protestant clergymen visited the pope to discuss grounds of reunion. They were given a cordial reception but were assured that the papacy could make no concessions or compromises but that if Protestants would return to the fold they would be "received with open arms". All changes and concessions must be made by the Protestants because Rome had never changed. Cardinal Gibbons said: "Amid the continual changes in human institutions she is the one Institution that never changes."--"Faith of Our Fathers", p.60.

A Hearty Embrace. In speaking of the return of Protestants to the fold Cardinal Gibbons said: "In coming to the Church, you are not entering a strange place, but you are returning to your Father's home. The house and furniture may look odd to you, but it is just the same as your forefathers left it three hundred years ago. In coming back to the Church, you worship where your fathers worshiped before you....You come back like the Prodigal Son to the home of your father and mother....One hearty embrace of your tender Mother will compensate you for all the sacrifices you have made."--"Faith of Our Fathers", Introduction, pp. 15, 16.

Religious Legislation. The greatest evidence of Protestantism's Romeward drift is the increasing demand on the part of the Protestant churches for religious legislation enforcing the observance of Sunday. Using the state to enforce the dogmas of the church and protect her institutions has ever been a cardinal principle of Catholicism. "Kings and subjects are alike subjects of the church; and the highest duty and glory of the state is to act as the handmaid of the church....The state has power from God; but it is a moral power, and the church has the right to say how it shall be exercised. The church's laws must be respected by individuals and nations."--"The Western Watchman", April 2, 1914.

Papal Institution. The observance of Sunday as a holy day has no foundation in Scripture but rests wholly upon the authority of the Catholic church. "The Catholic church of its own infallible authority created Sunday a holy day to take the place of the Sabbath of the old law."--"Kansas City Catholic", Feb.9,1893. "The Catholic Church over 1000 years before the existance of a Protestant; by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday....The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic church, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world.... Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping of Sunday."--"Catholic Mirror", Dec. 23, 1893.

Mark of Paganism. "There is no Spiritual evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week....Of course I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun-god, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism. There was and is a commandment to 'keep holy the Sabbath day', but that was Sabbath and not Sunday."--Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, author of the Baptist Manuel. From a paper on the "Transference of the Sabbath" read before a conference of Baptist ministers in New York City, and reported in the "Examiner" of Nov. 16, 1893.

Mark of Papal Power. "The church changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and all the world bows down and worships upon that day in silent obedience to the mandates of the Catholic Church. Is this not a living miracle--that those who hate us so bitterly, obey and acknowledge our power every week and do not know it?"-- "Hartford Weekly Call", Feb. 22, 1884. Report of lecture by a Catholic Priest in the opera house of Hartford on Feb. 18. In reply to a letter inquiring if the Catholic Church changed the Sabbath and considered the change as a mark of her authority, Cardinal Gibbons replied through his official organ "The Catholic Mirror", of Sept. 23, 1893: "Of course the Catholic church claims that the change was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and religious without her, and the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters." Catholic Authorities can be multiplied to show that they point to the change of the Sabbath as the outstanding sign or mark of their power and authority.

Enforced by Image. v. 15, 16. It is the mark of the beast that is to be enforced by false Protestantism who makes it also the sign and mark of their religion. The "National Reform Association" in its meeting in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. in 1894 voted the following resolution which was introduced by Rev. Herrick, Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly: "Resolved that the Sabbath (Sunday) is a sign between God and man, and its reverant obediance a mark of the nation whose God is Jehovah." Rev. J.G. Lorimer called Sunday "a mark of American religion." Thus the mark of paganism which became the mark of Catholicism also becomes the mark of apostate Protestantism.

None Can Escape. v. 12, 15, 16. Dr. David McAllister, one of the Presidents of the National Reform Association, in a speech at Lakeside, Ohio, in July, 1887, said: "Let a man be what he may--Jew, Seventh-day observer of some other denomination, or those who do not believe in the Christian Sabbath--let the law apply to every one, that there shall be no public desecrations of the first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath, the day of rest for the nation....They may hold any other day as sacred, and observe it; but that day which is the one day in seven for the nation at large, let that not be publicly desecrated by any one; by officer in the government, or by private citizen, high or low, rich or poor."

Religious Boycott. v. 17. In enforcing this mark Protestants will make use of the boycott used so effectually by the Papacy. Dean Alford in "Speaker's Commentary" says this refers to the commercial and spiritual interdicts which both pagan and papal persecutors have used against non-conformists and is still imposed in various ways. This was one of the most powerful weapons used by the papacy during the middle ages. Dr. Bascom Robins, in a lecture on "The Decalogue", delivered in Burlington, Kansas, in January, 1904, said: "There is a class of people in this country who will not keep the Christian Sabbath (Sunday) unless they are forced to do so; but that can be easily done. We have twenty millions of men, besides women and children, in this country, who want this country to keep the Christian Sabbath. If we would say we will not sell anything to them, we will not buy anything from them, we will not work for them or hire them to work for us, the thing could be wiped out, and all the world would keep the Christian Sabbath."

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Memory Text: Rev. 13:16.

FIRST-FRUITS OF FINAL HARVEST

49

On Mount Zion. Rev. 14:1. Mount Zion is God's dwelling-place. Isa. 8:18. It is associated with the heavenly Jerusalem. Isa. 24:23; Heb. 12:22. It is the headquarters of His government where He reigns. Micah 4:7. That the 144,000 are to hold high official positions in the kingdom is also evident from the fact that while on Mount Zion with Christ they are "before the throne of God," and on "the sea of glass." Rev. 14:3,5; 15:2,3. The sea of glass is the pavement of the throne room. They are "the most exalted of the redeemed host that stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb."--Vol. 5:215.

Character of God, "Having His name and the name of His Father written in their foreheads."--R.V. Name means character. The Father and Son have the same character. John 14:7; Col. 2:15. That the "name" of God and the "seal" of God are the same is evident from a comparison of Rev. 14:1, and Rev. 7:1-4. The seal is God's stamp of approval on perfection of character. "Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them."--Vol. 5:214. "Those who receive the seal of the living God, and are protected in the time of trouble, must reflect the image of Jesus fully."--E.W. 71. "We are to be distinguished from the world because God has placed His seal upon us, because He manifests in us His own character of love. Our Redeemer covers us with His righteousness."--M.H. 37. See also Eph. 5:27; 1 Thes. 5:23; Jude 24.

The New Song. v. 2,3. The "voice" from heaven "as the voice of many waters" is doubtless the voice of the redeemed as again mentioned in Rev. 19:1. "And the music which I heard was like that of harpists playing upon their harps."--Wey. Harps formed an important part of the temple music of the Hebrews and accompanied the songs of the Levitical choir. In the heavenly temple the 144,000 seem to form a special choir, and accompanied by an orchestra of harpists they will sing the song of the Lamb as none others of the redeemed host can sing it because of the experience through which they have passed. "It is the song of Moses and the Lamb,--a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience,--an experience such as no other company have ever had."--G.C. 649.

Song of Triumph. Rev. 15:2,3. The song of Moses and the Lamb is a song of victory and deliverance which will be sung by those who go through the final crises and are delivered from the sentence of death. Only the remnant who live through the time of trouble and are translated get the victory over "the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." While the 144,000 will be able to sing this song with a fuller meaning and interpretation because of their experience, the great multitude who also come "out of great tribulation" and experience the final triumph will also sing this song. "This is the theme, this is the song,--Christ all and in all,--in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and of the Lamb. It is a new song, for it was never before sung in heaven."--T.M. 433.

A Special Company. It is evident that the 144,000 are a special company of the redeemed out of the last generation who go through a special experience and are sealed for a special work on earth and exalted positions in heaven. "The 144,000 are presented as a select and special class of God's servants, chosen, marked, and set apart as none else, sealed by an angel with the seal of the living God....There is a special and peculiar isolation from all other classes of the saved....They are so unique and separate in their history, experience, and reward, that no one is able to learn or sing the song which they sing." "None others will ever fulfill just such a mission, as none others are ever sealed with the seal of the living God in the same way in which they were sealed. None others ever have just such an experience, in such a world as that through which they come to glory."--"The Apocalypse," Seiss, Vol. 3, pp. 19,25.

Reach High Standard. v. 4. "They are as pure as virgins."--Wey. Christ's loyal and pure church is represented as a "virgin," and the individual members as "virgins." 2 Cor. 11:2; Matt.25:1. It is the symbol of purity in both life and faith, bodily and spiritually. "They are called virgins because they profess a pure faith."--C.O.L. 406. The name or character of God is in their foreheads. They keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The obedient are said to be "undefiled" and sinners are "defiled." Ps. 119:1; Isa. 24:5. Unfaithfulness to God is represented as spiritual fornication and adultery. 2 Chron.21:11; Jer. 3:8,9; Hosea 1:2; 2:2; Rev. 17. Dean Alford believes that the language should be taken literally; that the 144,000 get complete victory over impurity of mind and body during the most licentious and immoral age of all history. They pass triumphantly through the antitype of the Baal-Peor experience of ancient Israel which came just before they entered Canaan.

Perfection in Purity. "Celibacy is not the subject or virtue in this description, but purity, freedom from contamination by the corruptions which prevail in their time. The reign of the Antichrist is the reign of harlotry, both literal and spiritual.... 'They are virgins', in that they have lived chaste lives, both as to faithfulness to God in their religion, and as to their pureness from all bodily lewdness."--"The Apocalypse," Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 22. Only the pure in heart can see God. Matt. 5:8. The sealed 144,000 must be pure in both mind and body. "The seal of God will never be places upon the forehead of an impure man or woman."--Vol. 5:216.

Special Privileges. Not all of the redeemed will have the precious privilege of going with Christ wherever He goes. He will doubtless visit all the worlds of His creation and which Him will go the 144,000. To the inhabitants of unfallen worlds this temple choir will sing the song of redeeming love as none others can sing it. In a special sense they seem to represent the Bride of Christ and go with Him on a wedding tour of the Universe. This privilege is doubtless granted them because they have gone through an experience more nearly like that through which Christ passed than any others and are more nearly like Him in character.

Are Translated. The 144,000 are "redeemed from among men" which doubtless indicates a translation. "Translation" is an entrance into heaven without having seen death. They are described in 1 Thes. 4:17 as "We which are alive and remain" who are "caught up...to meet the Lord in the air." These are contrasted with "the dead in Christ" who are resurrected. Verse 16. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." Heb.11:5. Then we are told that Enoch was translated because "he pleased God." "Translation" is defined as follows: "To remove or convey to heaven, as a human being, without death."--Webster. "To remove or carry to heaven without seeing death."--"Century Dictionary and Encyclopedia." "In Scripture, to remove or carry to heaven as a human being without natural death."--"New Standard Dictionary." "The sense of removing one from the earthly to the heavenly state without the intervening experience of death."--"The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia."

Testimony of Leaders. "The sealed company having become fully developed under the third angel's message, are found alive on the earth when Christ appears the second time in glory."--Eld. A. Smith, in R.H. Nov. 26, 1889. "While in great tribulation with the 'beast' and his 'image' they are translated from off the earth without dying."--Eld. G.B. Thompson, in R.H. Oct. 8;1889. "These are seen with the Lamb on Mount Zion as soon as they are translated, at the close of the work of the two-horned beast....They are a special company, distinct from all the rest of the saved,---they being translated without death....They are 'redeemed from among men'; i,e, in an instant, while living among the mass of mankind around them, these receive the touch of immortality, without going through the gates of death and the resurrection....Seventh-day Adventists have ever believed ? this company to be those who are saved when Jesus comes....They are to meet the fearful scenes connected with the close of human probation."--Eld. Geo. I. Butler, in R.H. Feb. 26, 1889.

Position of Uriah Smith. "They are 'redeemed from among men,' an expression that can be applicable only to those who are translated from among the living. Paul labored, if by any means he might attain to a resurrection from among the dead. This is the hope of those who sleep in Jesus,--a resurrection from the dead. A redemption from among men, from among the living, must mean a different thing, and can only mean one thing, and that a translation. Hence the 144,000, are the living saints, who will be translated at the second coming of Christ." "So the 144,000, ripening up for the heavenly garner here on earth during the troublous scenes of the last days, being translated to heaven without seeing death, and occupying a pre-eminent position."--"Daniel and the Revelation," pp. 629, 631.

Spirit of Prophecy. "Some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus."--Vol. 1:132. "As Enoch was translated to heaven before the destruction of the world by water, so the living righteous will be translated from the earth before its destruction by fire."--P.P. 89. See also Vol. 8:331. "Had not the life of Moses been marred with that one sin, in failing to give God the glory of bringing water from the rock at Kadesh, he would have entered the promised land, and would have been translated to heaven without seeing death."--P.P. 478.

Moses and Elijah. "Moses was present (at the Transfiguration) to represent those who will be raised from the dead at the second appearing of Jesus. And Elijah, who was translated without seeing death, represented those who will be changed to immortality at Christ's second coming, and will be translated to heaven without seeing death."--E.W. 164. "Moses upon the mount of Transfiguration was a witness to Christ's victory over sin and death. He represented those who shall come forth from the grave at the resurrection of the just. Elijah, who had been translated to heaven without seeing death, represented those who will be living upon the earth at Christ's second coming, and who will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpt';....Moses a representative of the risen saints, and Elijah of the translated ones."--D.A. 421,422. See also P.K. 227.

Live Through the Plagues. The following is daid of the 144,000 "These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as 'the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.' 'These are they which came out of great tribulation;' they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; and have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments."--G.C. 649. The judgments here mentioned are the seven last plagues which begin with the close of probation, Since the partial resurrection does not take place till the very close of the plagues and near the first general resurrection, it is evident that none of the 144,000 will even die and be resurrected. "The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted 'Alleluia' as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air."--E.W. 16.

The First-Fruits. v. 4. "The first-fruits to be reaped for God and the Lamb."--Moffatt, This text indicates that the 144,000 are "selected" or "gathered" from "among" others, to be the first-fruits of the final harvest, for wherever there are first-fruits there is of necessity a harvest to follow. The first-fruits of any harvest is that part of it that matures first and is only a small part of the whole. It is the choice part of the harvest which is carefully selected, marked, and gathered and dedicated to a holy use. The 144,000 are consecrated to the special service of "God and the Lamb."

Sifted and Anointed. The waving of the first-fruit sheaf of the early harvest took place on the day following the Passover Sabbath. The grain was threshed and thoroughly winnowed and the sifted-out chaff burned. The grain was parched, ground into meal, and then anointed with incense, The fragrant meal was then waved toward the four points of the compass as the first-fruits of the great spring harvest. Jesus, the Lord of the harvest, carefully selected the 12 apostles "from among men." They were the best He could find to train for a special work. Their preparation included a threshing experience and a thorough sifting out of sin and sinners. Judas, the traitor, was separated from them. See Luke 22:31,32; Matt. 3:11,12. The experience in the Garden of Gethsemene and during the trials and crucifixion of Christ, and the heart-searching experience of the upper-room, separated all chaff from the disciples. They were then anointed with the Holy Spirit and their lives made fragrant for Christ. The results of the day of Pentecost was the antitype of the waving of the first-fruits sheaf when thousands were converted including "devout men out of every nation under heaven." It was the beginning of a world harvest of souls for the kingdom under the early rain of the Spirit.

Final Sifting. The 144,000 must also pass through a sifting, shaking, purifying process to bring them to perfection or maturity so as to qualify them to be the first-fruits of the final harvest. See Eze. 20:35-38; Amos 9:9,10; Rev. 3:16-19. "But the days of purification of the church are hastening on apace. God will have a people pure and true. In the mighty sifting soon to take place, we shall be better able to measure the strength of Israel. The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor....In this time, the gold will be separated from the dross in the church., True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness....Then will the church of Christ appear 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.'"--Vol. 5:80-82. In E.W. 270,271, the latter rain is described as following the shaking.

Without Blemish. v. 5. "They are without blemish."--R.V. All first-fruits had to be "without blemish" before being dedicated to the service of the Lord. They must be the "best" and "chief" fruits of the harvest. The first-fruits constitute "the fruits or product first matured and collected in any season."--Webster. "Matured" is from the Latin "maturus", meaning "ripe, of full age, perfected by time or natural growth, brought to perfection, completed, prepared, ready."--Webster. The 144,000 are the first to be brought to perfection in the harvest of the last generation. They reach mature spiritual growth and are sealed and given the latter rain, the purpose of which is to call the innumerable company of God's people out of Babylon.

The Full Harvest. Rev. 14:6-16 pictures the entire harvest gathered by the three-fold message that goes to every nation. The 144,000 first-fruits are a part of the harvest; separated only because they are the first to mature and because they are dedicated to God for a special service. The early gospel harvest under the early rain was very abundant. Millions came out of Jewry and heathenism. We are told that the final visitation of power under the latter rain and the resultant harvest will be "much more abundant." Among those gathered will be many Jews. "Among the are some who, like Saul of Tarsus, are mighty in the Scriptures, and these will proclaim with wonderful power the immutability of the law of God. The God of Israel will bring this to pass in our day."--A.A. 381.

Many Ministers. Under the early rain "a great company of priests" became Christians. Acts 6:7. Likewise under the latter rain many ministers with multitudes from their flocks will accept the last message. "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth, there will be, among the people of the Lord, such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His people....Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time, to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming."--G.C.464.

Some of Rulers. "Many of the rulers are those whom Satan controls; but I saw that God has His agents, even among the rulers. And some of them will yet be converted to the truth. They are now acting the part that God would have them....At the loud cry of the third angel, these agents will have an opportunity to receive the truth, and some of them will be converted, and endure with the saints through the time of trouble."--Vol. 1:203. In G.W. 347, 348, we are told that many men of ability, influence and wealth will unite with the remnant and help give the message as did Nicodemus and Joseph and others during the early rain.

Many Backsliders Return. "When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd....Then will the message of the third angel swell to the loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord."--Vol.6:401. This cannot refer to those who are "spued" or "purged" out during the shaking time because they rejected the Laodicean message, but to those who drifted out through discouragement during the wilderness wandering. They did not see the evidence they expected that God was with His people. When the Lord "returns to Zion" as manifested by the latter rain, and they can no longer say, "Where is their God?" many will return to the fold. The giving and acceptance of the Laodicean message with its complete spiritual remedy is the need of the present hour for on this message "the destiny of the church hangs." E.W. 270.

Memory Text: Rev. 14:1.

THE JUDGMENT-HOUR MESSAGE

Angel Messenger. Rev. 14:6,7. This angel and the two that follow are symbols of the people of God who carry these heaven-sent messages to the world. "The three angels of Revelation 14 represent the people who accept the light of God's messages, and go forth as His agents to sound the warning throughout the length and breadth of the earth."--Vol. 5:455,456. "The three angels of Revelation 14 are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, symbolizing the work of those who proclaim the first, second, and third angel's message."--Vol. 6:17. Since angels are God's messengers they constitute beautiful symbols of the proclamation of the gospel by His people.

Another Phase. Six times in the book of Revelation God's last message is symbolized by an angel from heaven, each picturing a different phase. Rev. 7 presents the sealing phase; Rev. 10, the Sanctuary; Rev. 14, the judgment, the fall of Babylon, and the warning against apostasy; and Rev. 18, the call out of Babylon during the loud cry and latter rain. It takes all six to make a complete message and they all culminate in the loud cry which lightens the earth with glory. It is the message that gathers both the first-fruits and the final gospel harvest from "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Everlasting Gospel. "Eternal good tidings"--R.V. "The good news decreed from eternity."--20th C.N.T. "Good news of the ages."--Wey. Just as there has been but one true church in all ages, there has also been but one gospel. It is everlasting in both time and results. The positive phase of the gospel throughout all ages has been justification and righteousness by faith in Christ. See Rom. 1:16,17. This is the very core of the gospel around which all other truths cluster. The negative phase embraces the warnings against the prevailing apostasy of the age. The negative phase changes to fit the changing conditions and the various agencies used by Satan to oppose the gospel. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet is the Satanic triumvir against which the final warning is given.

Eternal Destiny. Noah was "a preacher of righteousness". 2 Peter 2:5. While righteousness by faith was the center and the positive phase of his message that saved from sin, the negative phase was the warning of the results of disobedience. His message was present truth for that generation and the eternal destiny of the antideluvian world depended on their attitude towards the everlasting gospel of their time. The same was true of the message of Lot to Sodom and Gomorrah; of Elijah to apostate Israel; of John the Baptist; of Christ; and of the final three-fold message of Rev. 14. It is God's message of present truth for this generation and the eternal welfare of all people depends on their attitude toward it. To accept it means life eternal; to reject it brings the vengeance of an offended God. For this reason the message is given "with a loud voice" so all can hear. "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord."--Jer. 22:29.

World Message. The four-fold enumeration: "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," indicates that it is a world-wide message. All six of the Revelation pictures of the final message are world-wide. It is the last message because it is followed by the harvest which is "the end of the world." Matt. 13:39. It finishes the gospel commission in the earth and ushers in the kingdom of God. The angel is represented as flying "in the midst of heaven", which doubtless symbolizes rapidity of movement and that it is world-embracing. Birds that travel swiftly for long distances fly in mid-heaven. "This represents the speed and directness with which the church is to prosecute her work."M.M.131.

The Message. v. 7. "Reverance God and give Him praise."-20th C.N.T. The call indicates that the world is praising and giving glory to other than God. The dragon, the beast, and the falst prophet are receiving its worship. It is a counter message to that of the false prophet which commands the world to worship the beast and his image. Both are world messages, one exalting the creature and the other the Creator. God's message calls for the worship of the Maker of all things which must include the observance of the Sabbath, the memorial of Creation. A part of the fourth or Sabbath commandment is here quoted. Reference to God's power to create is an evidence of His power to redeem and is an important part of all heaven-sent messages.

The Sabbath. Creation and the Sabbath are inseparable, therefore true Sabbath observance must be an important part of the message that demands the worship of the Creator. The Sabbath is the sign of true worship. "God's blessing and sanctifying the day, meant that He separated it from a common to a religious use, to be a perpetual memorial or sign that all who thus observe it would show themselves to be the worshipers of that God who made the world in six days and rested on the seventh."--"Binney's Theological Compend", pp. 169, 170.

"He that observes the Sabbath aright holds the history of that which it celebrates to be authentic. He therefore believes in the creation of the first man; in the creation of a fair abode for man in the space of six days; in the primeval and absolute creation of the heavens and the earth, and as a necessary antecedent to all this, in the Creator, who at the close of His latest creative effort, rested on the seventh day. The Sabbath thus becomes a sign by which the believers in a historical revelation are distinguished from those who have allowed these great facts to fade from their remembrance."--James G. Murphy. Quoted in "The Moody Bible Institute Monthly", Nov. 1930. To worship God because He is the Creator is the true basis of worship in heaven and on earth. See Rev. 4: 10,11; Isa. 66:22,23.

Reason for Message. "Because the hour of His judgment is come"--Emphatic Diaglott. "Because the time of His judgment has come."-Wey. This is the best of reasons why He should be worshiped. Because the time has come when mankind must be called to account. Daniel Webster said: "The most solemn and awful thought to me is, accountability." All must render an account to their Maker and none can escape. 2 Cor. 5:10. As with earthly courts the Lord has a definite time for the judgment. Eccl. 3:17; Acts 17:30, 31. God will meet this appointment and we cannot avoid it.

Part of Gospel. To convince sinners of a coming judgment when they must give an account of their conduct has always been a part of the everlasting gospel. It is an important part of the work of the Holy Spirit. John 16;7,8,11. That the heavenly tribunal has not always been in session is evident from Acts 24:25; 2 Peter 2:4,9. Justice demands that punishment be reserved till after the judgment. Because a person's influence lives on after death it is impossible to render judgment and mete out rewards till the end of human history. Of the example of righteous Abel it is said: "By it he being dead yet speaketh." Heb.11:4. The same can be said of the lives of all and therefore justice is impossible before the human race has run its course.

The Hour is Come. Paul reasoned with Felix of judgment to come", and Peter declared that the unjust were "reserved""unto the day of judgment to be punished". Luther said that the judgment would come in about 300 years. How is it possible to know the time of the judgment so as to proclaim a world message announcing that "the hour of His judgment is come?" The Prophet Daniel saw the judgment scene in heaven following the end of the 1260 years of papal supremacy. Dan. 7:9,10,13. It is here placed between 1798 and the coming of Christ. "I watched until an Assize (court) was held, when a primaeval Being sat on the throne of justice."--Moffatt. In Dan. 8:13,14,17; 9:24,25, the exact time for the beginning of the judgment is located. It would begin at the close of the 2300 year time-prophecy or in 1844.

Judgment-Hour Message. Daniel was shown what would take place in heaven at the close of the 2300 years, and the Revelator what would take place on earth at the same time. A message would be heralded to all the world telling every judgment-bound creature that the supreme court of the universe is now in session. When the supreme court of the United States convenes a crier makes the announcement with a loud voice. The same is true of other courts. First a definite time is set for court to convene, The time is then published so that all having cases pending may prepare. Then when court begins it is announced with a loud voice. 2500 years ago through His prophet Daniel the Lord published the time of the judgment which He had before "appointed". When the time comes He heralds it to the world with a message. It is given "with a loud voice" so that none will have an excuse.

Typical Judgment. The judgment at the close of Christ's priestly ministry was prefigured in the typical service by the day of Atonement. It was also known as the "cleansing of the sanctuary", and was the most solemn day of the year. It was a work of judgment as it resulted in the cutting off of the unfaithful and the blotting out of their names from the registry of Israel. A modern Hebrew poet says, "It is the judgment day of all the year." Dean Farrar, quoting from ancient authors, shows that the Jews counted the day of Atonement as the judgment: "So awful was the day of atonement that we are told in a Jewish book of ritual that the very angels run to and fro in fear and trembling, saying, 'Lo! the day of judgment has come.'"--"The Early Days of Christianity", p. 38. This is the language used in Rev. 14:7.

Investigative Judgment. The main judgment takes place during the millennium when the "saints shall judge the world" and "shall judge angels", and "judgment shall be given to the saints of the Most High." 1 Cor. 6:2,3; Dan. 7:22; Dan. 12:1,2; Luke 20:35; and Rev. 20:15 indicate clearly that an investigation of the records must be made before Jesus comes. It is a sort of grand jury investigation to determine who shall be saved and what indictment shall be brought against those who are tried in the general judgment, or rather, against whom indictments whall be brought. The function of a grand jury is to determine whether certain persons shall go to trial after a thorough investigation of their cases. This is the work of the judgment now in session.

Second Angel's Message. v. 8. Babylon was the first great city built after the flood and became the center of idolatry and corruption. There Satan through Nimrod and Samiramis established his counterfeit system of religion through which he has ruled the world and persecuted the people of God. "He (Nimrod) is said to have been the first that gathered mankind into communities, the first of mortals that reigned, and the first that offered idolatrous sacrifices....All tradition from the earliest times bears testimony to the apostasy of Nimrod, and to his success in leading men away from the patriarchial faith."--"The Two Babylons", Alexander Hislop, pp. 51,52.

"That Great City." The city was built in defiance of God and because of its religious system, founded on human effort to reach heaven by the building of a tower, it was called Babylon which means "The Gate of God". The Lord however termed it Babel or "confusion". See Gen. 10:8-10. "Nimrod was a mighty rebel before the Lord."--Targum of Jonathan. "Nimrod was mighty in sin, lying in wait to catch and overthrow men and draw them away from the worship of the true God."--Jewish Targum. Because Satan's system had its origin in the city of Babylon his false religion through all ages has been divinely termed "Babylon the Great". "Nothing is more marked than the contrast which is maintained between Babylon as a type of the world, and Jerusalem as the type of the church."--Dr. Lee in "Speaker's Commentary". Babylon was built by Nimrod, the mighty rebel, and means "confusion". "The city of confusion." Isa. 24:10. Jerusalem was built by David, the man after God's own heart, and means "founded peaceful", and, "a city that is compact together". It is the symbol of peace and unity. See Ps.122:3.

Cause of Fall. "The nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad."-Jer. 51:7. Wine here is a symbol of error or false teaching which leads to both literal and spiritual fornication. "Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error."--T.M. 61. Idolatry in any of its forms is called harlotry or liventiousness all through the Scriptures. "The maddening wine of her licentiousness."--20th C.N.T. "The wine of the anger provoked by her fornication."--Wey. Paganism at heart is corrupt and leads its devotees to moral degeneration. Spiritual adultery eventually leads to physical uncleanness. The corruption of the modern world is the result of Satanic rulership through false religions.

Obscene Nature Worship. "The founders of the Cushite race, Cush or Belus, and his son Nimrod, were the original authors of an idolatry which consisted of an obscene nature worship, or the worship of the principle of natural life and generation, the chief manifestation of which was supposed to be the Sun. It was combined with the practice of magic, and the worship of, and intercourse with Spirits of Evil. This idolatry seems to have originated, in the first case, in antediluvian times, and to have been the immediate cause of the destruction of the world by the Deluge; and its resuscitation after the Deluge, while the memory of that event was still fresh, led to its overthrow in Egypt and the violent death of its chief author, the Babylonian monarch."--"Romanism and Spiritualism; their Identity with Paganism", Garnier, p. 4.

A Moral Fall. Isa. 47:1,2. The second angel's message announces that Babylon is fallen because of the "furious wine of her prostitution."--Concordant Version. The moral condition in the city of Babylon reached its climax during the licentious feast of Belshazzar. "Nothing could be more corrupt than its morals, nothing more fitted to excite and allure to immoderate pleasures. The rites of hospitality were polluted by the grossest and most shameful lusts. Money dissolved every tie, whether of kindred, respect or esteem. The Babylonians were very greatly given to wine...Women were present at their convivialities, first with some degree of propriety, but, growing worse and worse by degrees, they ended by throwing off at once their modesty and their clothing."--Q. Curtius in "Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia."

Babylon is Fallen. To announce the fall of Babylon and its cause is an important part of God's last message to the world. This subject will be more fully dealt with in chapters 17 and 18. Modern Babylon is leading the whole world into idolatry and licentiousness. The spiritual and moral corruption of the modern world is similar to that existing before the flood and in ancient Babylon, and is leading the world to its final doom. Before the final sentence of the Great Judge is written on the wall of Modern Babylon, God's people must be called out, and this is the purpose of His final gospel message.

More Light. Rev. 18:1-5. The fact that the second angel's message is repeated and given greater emphasis during the lour cry of the third angel is evidence that it is then better understood. Floods of light will be shed upon all three messages during the latter rain. "We talk about the first angel's message and the second angel's message, and we think we have some understanding of the third angel's message. But as long as we are content with a limited knowledge, we shall be disqualified to obtain clearer views of truth. He who holds forth the word of life must take time to study the Bible and to search his own heart."--G.W. 251.

Memory Text: Rev. 14:6

THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE

51

Terrible Warning. Rev. 14:9-12. This is the most awful warning found in the Bible. No other message ever threatened such terrible judgments upon the rejecters. Bengel declares this to be: "The most awful threatening the Bible contains." The sin of rejecting the third angel's message is unpardonable. It is the sin against the Holy Spirit because the message finishes its work under the latter rain during which time it swells into the lour cry. To reject a heaven-sent message given under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit is a sin that is unforgivable. No wonder it is followed by the unmixed wrath of God.

Warning Against Apostasy. Verses 9-11 is the negative phase of the third angel's message. The first angel's message calls upon the world to worship the Creator and give Him glory, indicating that glory and honor are being given to another. The third angel tells who is receiving the glory and worship of the world and what the awful consequences will be. To worship any creature or earthly power is idolatry. Rom. 1:25. While it is a world apostasy involving "all that dwell upon the earth...both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond", God will nevertheless hold men accountable as individuals. "If any man", indicates an appear to the individual. As free moral agents with the power of choice each person is responsible for the consequences of his decision. The argument that we "should obey the laws of the land" and "follow the prevailing customs" will not clear us in the judgment. "Follow not a multitude to do evil" is good advice.

Beast and Image. The beast under the last head is the papacy. The image is the union of church and state under apostate Protestantism. A warning against the beast under its successive heads has always been a part of the negative phase of the gospel for the beast has existed from the beginning of the reign of sin. The image on the other hand is a last day power and is not fully formed at the present time. The same class worship both the beast and his image for the same false and counterfeit religious institution is enforced by both. The victors in this conflict are pictured in Rev. 15:2,3. They live through to the end of the struggle and are translated. It cannot include those who have died before the image of the beast is formed and the crisis is reached. Not yet has the enforced worship become a reality.

Mark of Beast. The beast has a mark over which victory must be gained. Receiving this mark in the forehead or hand is what constituted the worship of both the beast and his image. It is the sign of allegience and false worship. It is the negative of the seal, sign, or mark of God which is placed in the forehead of His people. Rev. 7:2,3. "The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh day Sabbath, the Lord's memorial of creation....The mark of the beast is the opposite of this,--the observance of the first day of the week. This mark distinguishes those who acknowledge the supremacy of the papal authority from those who acknowledge the authority of God."--Vol. 8:117. The Sabbath or seal of God is really the emblem of loyalty and true worship; and Sunday the flag of rebellion.

Sign of Character. Just as the Sabbath is the outward sign of the character of God, so Sunday observance becomes the outward sign of the character of the beast and of Satan. However, none receive the mark of the beast till they receive his name or character. See Rev. 13:16,17. "The character of the beast"-Douay. "The mark, even the name of the beast."-R.V. "The mark--either the name of the Wild Beast or the number which his name represents."--Wey. All who worship the beast and his image and "receive his character" (Douay) will receive the unmingled wrath of God. In Rev. 14:11 it is called "the mark of his name". Name stands for character.

"Number of His name." "The number which his name represents"-Wey. The number of the beast is 666. Rev. 13:18. "The number indicates a man's name."-20th C.N.T. The name of the beast is represented by the number 666 and that number indicates his character. "Vicarius Filii Dei" is the official title of the "man of sin" at the head of the beast power, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thes. 2:3,4. Both the name and number is symbolic of self-exaltation, or the exaltation and worship of the creature. Against this Satanic spirit the final warning is given and over it God's people gain the victory. All who accept the final three-fold message receive the character of God of which the Sabbath is the outward sign or mark. Those who reject this warning receive the character of Satan, of which Sunday observance is the outward sign or mark.

Characters Being Molded. "Those who are uniting with the world, are receiving the worldly mold, and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth,--these are receiving the heavenly mold, and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads, When the decree goes forth, and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity."--Vol. 5:216. Not until the character is fixed does a sinner receive the mark of the beast or a righteous man the seal of God. We cannot say that either mark or stamp is yet impressed. This doubtless because the full spiritual significance of either will not be fully understood till the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. "We were all filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully."--E.W. 85. "The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, and will not be understood until the unrolling of the scroll."--Vol. 8:159.

Rival Institutions. From the gates of Eden Sabbath and Sunday have been rival institutions. "The Sabbath was honored by all the children of Adam that remained loyal to God. But Cain and his descendants did not respect the day upon which God had rested. They chose their own time for labor and for rest, regardless of Jehovah's express command...Cain...had gone out from the presence of the Lord, cast away the promise of the restored Eden, to seek his possessions and enjoyment in the earth under the curse of sin, thus standing at the head of that great class of men who worship the god of this world."--P.P. 80,81. Cain and his followers worshipped the beast or served Satan. They rejected the Sabbath and rested on another day. It must have been the same day that has been the mark of rebellion ever since. Was this "the mark of Cain"? Cain must have had the character of Satan and doubtless observed the outward sign of that character.

Unmixed Wrath. v. 10,11. In the past God's judgments have been mingled with mercy that the people might learn righteousness. See Isa. 26:9,10. But because the worshipers of the beast and his image have drunken of the cup of Babylon they must drink to the bitter dregs the cup of God's fury. Rev. 14:8; 16:19; Psalms 75:7,8, This cup is the undiluted, concentrated wrath of outraged love and holiness and justice. Jesus drank to its dregs the cup of suffering in the Garden of Gethsemene and on the Cross of Calvary so that man could escape the cup of His wrath against sin in which there can be no element of mercy.

Complete Destruction. After the wicked have drunk the cup of God's wrath "they shall be as though they had not been". See Obadiah 15,16. "As you did then, so is it done to you: your deeds recoil on your own head. Yes, the day of the Eternal is at hand, with doom for all the nations. You on My sacred hill have drunk the cup, and so shall every nation drink it at My hand, drink it and stagger and vanish."--Moffatt. There can be no doubt but this is the same event as pictured by the Seer of Patmos. The Bible is its own interpreter and when all the texts on the subject are examined it is clear that eternal, conscious torment in an ever-burning hell is not taught, and therefore, it cannot be taught in our text. See also Ps.37:9-11,20; Nah. 1:9,10; Mal. 4:1-3. The wicked are brought to "ashes". The strongest statements possible are made to make plain the complete annihilation of the wicked. God's original plan will be carried out and every creature in the universe will join in praising God without a discordant note. See Rev. 5:13.

No Eternal Torment. Rev. Conway in "Pulpit Commentary" declares Rev. 14:10,11 to be "The only passage that seems to teach everlasting suffering", but that "the conscience revolts against" such teaching, and that "insistance upon it has generated more unbelief and atheism than, perhaps, any other cause whatsoever." The margin of the R.V. says, "for ages of ages". Rev. Clemance in "Pulpit Commentary" says of this text: "It does not affirm the absolute endlessness of the punishment. Since the word "age" has a plural, it plainly is not necessarily infinite. For no such word could have a plural. Infinity cannot ever be doubled much less be multiplied indefinitely. Further, no finite multiple of a finite term can possibly reach infinity. So to affirm the absolute unendingness of this punishment would be to go beyond the text."

Meaning of Forever. Forever with God means eternity but as applied to man in the Scriptures it means as long as he lives. With the righteous in their redeemed state "forever" will be eternity; with the wicked it will be until life is extinct in the lake of fire. See Ex. 21:6; 1 Sam. 1:22,28. The three days Jonah was in the belly of the whole is called "forever". Jonah 2:6. In Jude 7, Sodom and Gomorrha are said to have suffered "the vengeance of eternal fire", and "are set forth for an example" of the final destruction of the wicked. Thus the Bible interprets the meaning of its own language.

The Positive Phase. v. 12. "Here is an opportunity for endurance on the part of God's people who carefully keep His commandments and the faith of Jesus!"-Wey. It is through the faith of Jesus that we obtain righteousness and righteousness is obedience to divine law. Rom. 1:17; 3:22; Isa. 51:7. "Conformity of heart and life to divine law."-Webster. This conformity to the character of God is obtained only through faith in Jesus or the faith of Jesus. See Rom. 9:30-32; 10:2,3. Wey. The imputed and imparted righteousness of Christ by faith is the very core of the everlasting gospel.

Vital Part of Message. "Several have written me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'"--C.O.R.80. "Verity" means "truth, fact, reality, etc. In T.M. 91-98, the message of Christ's righteousness to be received as a gift by faith is declared to be, "the third angel's message, in clear, distinct lines....which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in large measure." Then follows a fearful warning against those who reject the message and hate and despise the messengers.

Brings Latter Rain. "The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel."--Vol. 6:19. A mere warning against apostasy and its results is not the gospel at all. It has no salvation in it for the purpose of the gospel is to save from sin and impute and impart Christ's righteousness. Those who do not put the positive phase into the third angel's message are not even preaching it. When we learn to balance the message, giving the proper emphasis to both its positive and negative features, the latter rain will fall and give power to lighten the earth with glory.

The Messengers. In this world of rebellion it takes patience to obey God. Obedience is the sign of heavenly citizenship and it arouses the enmity of Satan. Those who receive and give the message are victors over sin which is "the transgression of the law". 1 John 3:4. One has said: "Sin is the infraction of law; the punishment is God's defense of law." To obey the beast instead of God is a terrible infraction of divine law and hence the awful judgments to defend the divine adminiatration.

Memory Text: Rev. 14:12.

Persecution. Rev. 14:12. "The endurance of the saints."--Concordant Version. This indicates that they pass through a time of persecution. "Patience" indicates severe trials. Those who accept and proclaim the three-fold message will have to endure the wrath of Satan. All must endure either the wrath of God or of the beast. Those who remain loyal to God must pass through "great tribulation". They will be characterized by great patience and longsuffering. See James 5:6-8. Their obedience to the commandments of God and their possession of the righteousness of Christ by faith makes them the special objects of Satan's wrath. Rev. 12:17. "They have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar."--Vol. 5:475.

The Blessed Dead. Rev. 14:13. The voice from heaven pronouncing a blessing on the righteous dead is doubtless Christ's. He made possible the destruction of death through His death and a future resurrection by His resurrection. Who could better bless those who "die in union with the Lord."--20th C.N.T. The reason for this blessing is announced by the Holy Spirit. The message that brings so much comfort in time of bereavement is the testimony of the Two Witnesses or Comforters. One reason for this blessing is because they have part in the first resurrection. Rev. 20:6. In fact they come up in the special resurrection. Dan. 12:2.

The Glorious Dead. The glorious dead of this world are the great war heroes. To their memory great momuments and memorials are erected and dedicated. But the truly glorious dead are those who die in the Lord though they sleep in unknown graves. Since death ends our probation and fixes our destiny, it is one of the most important events with which we have to do. With death the character and destiny are fixed for weal or woe, for eternal life or eternal death. "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." Eccl. 11:3. To die in the Lord is a triumph. To die the death of the righteous is a worthy ambition. Num. 23:10. To know such a death is to know the power of Christ's resurrection. See Phil. 3:10; 1 Thes. 4:16-18. Such a death has always been precious to the Lord. Ps. 116:15.

"From Henceforth". "From this hour."--20th C.N.T. "From this time onward."-Wey. From what time or hour? Is it from the "hour of His judgment" mentioned in verse 7 when the final message began? If so it is doubtless because those who die in the Lord under the third angel's message have part in the special resurrection. See E.W. 285. Or is it from the beginning of the latter rain when Satan becomes "furiously angry" with the remnant and wages war on them? Are they blessed because they do not have to live thru the time of trouble and wrath which Job and Isaiah prayed that they might escape by death? Job 14:13; Isa. 26:19-21. "It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who will be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended."-Vol. 9:16. The second reason for the special blessing is because they "rest" from their labors and the influence of their godly lives still speaks. It is sweet rest after the wearisome toil and strife through which they have passed. Their reward is assured.

The Royal Reaper. v. 14. Christ is declared to be the "Sower" and "The Lord of the harvest". Matt. 13:37; 9:38. He and His angels are said to be the reapers and the "harvest is the end of the world." Matt. 13:39. Christ came at His first advent for the purpose of sowing the seed; His second advent is the reaping time when He gathers the fruits of His labors into His garner. Long has the great Husbandman waited "for the precious fruit of the earth" and at last the harvest time comes. The golden crown shows His royalty. He is the King of kings; the Sovereign of the righteous He comes to gather. He is their King; they are His citizens.

The Sharp Sickle. The symbol is that of a harvest reaper going forth into the field white in readiness for the sickle. The sickle is sharp in preparation for a quick work. In a special sense it doubtless symbolizes the final three-fold message that gathers in bundles, first the first-fruits, and then the great harvest. The sitting posture of the Son of Man doubtless indicates a work of judgment or separation. At the time of the harvest the final and eternal separation is made between the wheat and the tares, the righteous and the wicked. See Matt. 13:41-43; 25:31-34.

A Ripe Harvest. v. 15, 16. "The harvest of the earth is ripe and ready."--Moffatt. "Is fully ripe."--R.V. "Is over ripe."-Wey. It indicates that the reaping is done at the last hour; that further delay would be impossible. It also indicates that both the early and latter rains had fallen and accomplished their work of bringing the grain to perfection. Joel 2:23,24. Both rains are necessary to produce and ripen the final gospel harvest. "In the East the former rain falls at the sowing time. It is necessary that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain, and prepares it for the sickle."--T.M. 506.

Spiritual Application. "The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit....By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ....The latter rain ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of Man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection."--Id. 506. As the harvest pictured by the Revelator is "fully ripe" it is evident that the latter rain has brought it to perfection.

Both Rains Necessary. "Many have in great measure failed to receive the former rain....They expect the lack to be supplied by the latter rain....While we cherish the blessings of the former rain, we must not on the other hand, lose sight of the fact that without the latter rain, to fill out the ears and ripen the grain, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain.... If we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door."--Id. 507, 508. Only fully ripe, or matured, or perfected characters will be gathered by the great Reaper when He comes to gather His harvest. He gathers no green or half-ripe or partially developed grain; it must be fully matured. It is brought to full maturity by the latter rain. "They will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation."--Vol.1:188.

Another Harvest. v. 17-19. This harvest is also "fully ripe". See also Joel 3:13,14. The latter rain ripens both harvests. The same rain that causes the wheat to grow to perfection also develops the tares. The rejection of the three-fold message under the power of the Holy Spirit ripens the harvest of sin and rebellion. Sin reaches its maturity in the wicked at the same time that righteousness develops to perfection in the saints. Then the line of demarkation between saints and sinners will be clear and distinct and Mal. 3:18 will be fulfilled.

Two World Messages. Both harvests are prepared for the reaping by the two world messages that gather the inhabitants of earth into two groups. The message of God gathers the righteous, and the message of the beast and false prophet gathers the wicked. The gathering of the wicked to the worship of the beast and his image is represented by the gathering of vultures to a carcass. See Matt. 24:24,28. "There will the vultures flock together."-Wey. Very soon after a beast dies in the Orient from 20 to 50 vultures gather to the carcass from where no one knows. The carcass becomes their habitation until it is consumed. This is the illustration in Rev. 18:2,3.

The Altar Angel. The angel from the altar had power over fire, the symbol of judgment. See Rev. 8:5. This may be Christ who commands that the harvest of the wicked be gathered for the winepress of His wrath. It is Christ who sends forth His angels to gather the tares for the furnace of fire. See Matt.13:38-42. Satan sows the seeds of unbelief that produces the harvest of tares and wild grapes. Divine agencies put in the sickle and cast them into the fire or the winepress of God's wrath. This too is a sharp sickle that cuts clean and leaves no gleanings. When the harvest is over the wicked are no more.

Winepress of Wrath. v. 19. This is a companion text to Rev. 16:19. Never did such divine wrath and indignation follow a heaven-sent message. Under the rulership of the beast, rebellion ripens to its fullest and most God-defying fruitage. "That day shall find wickedness and confederation in iniquity ripened to the full. The very prince of hell shall then have incorporated himself personally in the government of the world, speaking through its heads, dictating its religion and its laws, controlling its trade, enforcing the worship of himself as God, cutting off the heads of those who dissent, filling the world with the worst of blasphemies, and compelling all that would like to receive the mark of allegiance to him."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 2, p. 264.

Without the City. v. 20. What city? Zech. 14:3,4,9,10. This is doubtless a description of the battle of Armageddon which will be fought near the city of Jerusalem in the valley of Megeddo. "That has ever been one of God's great battle grounds for the judging of the armies of the wicked. There Jabin's hosts, with their 900 chariots of iron, were utterly overwhelmed by Jehovah's special interference. There the Midianites, and Amalekites, and children of the East, were routed before Gideon's 300 men with pitchers and lamps. There Samson triumphed with his crude instrument over the might of the Philistines. There the ruddy son of Jesse met and slew the great Goliath, and opened a breach of destruction upon those who defied Israel's God. And it is but fitting that there should be the seat of the winepress for the final crushing out of the mightier Jabin and Goliath of the last evil days."--Id. Vol. 3, p. 50. This may also include the battle of Gog and Magog without the New Jerusalem at the close of the millennium. See Zech. 14:4,5,12,13; Rev. 20:7-9.

A Great Slaughter. "Bozrah" is named by Isaiah as the place where Christ treads the winepress alone and stains His garments with the blood of His foes. Isa. 34:6-8; 63:1-4. Bozrah is on the southeast of the plains of Esdraelon, and Megiddo on the northwest. The distance between them is 1600 stadia, here translated "furlongs". "For a distance of 200 miles"-Wey. A furlong is about an eighth of a mile. Doubtless the whole territory will be covered with armed men in deadly combat. Isa. 34:1-3 describes this great battle when so many are killed that "the mountains shall be melted with their blood."

Lakes of Blood. On this battle field will be pools and lakes of blood to the horses bridles. The Jews said: "When Hadrian besieged the city called Bitter, he slew so many, that the horses waded in blood up to their mouths."--"Quoted by Dr. Adam Clarke. It is said that in the battle of Mukden there were pools of blood that reached to the knees of the fighting soldiers, and in which the wounded were sometimes drowned. "When the Romans destroyed Jerusalem so great was the bloodshed that Josephus says the whole city ran down with the blood to such a degree that the fires of many of the houses were quenched by it. When Sylla took Athens, Plutarch says the blood that was shed in the market-place alone covered all the ceramicus as far as Dipylus, and some testify that it ran through the gates and overflowed the suburbs."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3; p. 56.

Sacrifices to Mars. On the altar of the god of war were sacrificed a million lives during the Civil War. 12,000,000 have been slaughtered by the wars of Germany during the last 30 years. It is estimated that Justinian sacrificed 20,000,000 lives during his wars, while the death toll during the recent world war was more than 40,000,000. These were only skirmishes compared with Armageddon, the Waterloo of the Ages. No wonder Christ is pictured as emerging from the conflict with His garments sprinkled with blood. Isa. 63:1-4; Rev. 19:13-16. To eradicate sin requires a bloody operation but "affliction shall not rise up the second time."

Memory Text: Rev. 14:14.

The Plague Angels. Rev. 15:1. This is said to be "another sign in heaven, great and marvelous", indicating that symbols are used. Just as angels in the previous chapter symbolized heaven-sent messages carried by the people of God, so angels are employed to represent the series of judgment messages that are to visit those who reject the everlasting gospel. Seven again is the symbol of completeness and includes all the judgments of God that are poured out after the close of probation upon this rebel world. The angels of wrath follow the angels of mercy.

Completed Wrath. In the seven last plagues "is filled up the wrath of God". The language indicates that these judgments bring an end to sin and its punishment. "Because with them the wrath of God is ended."--20th C.N.T. "Which are the last for in them is finished the wrath of God."--R.V. "Because by them the wrath of God was to be completed."--Emphatic Diaglott. Since the wrath of God is not satisfied till sin and sinners are destroyed, the plagues must include the lake of fire. The day of vengeance reaches from the close of probation to the destruction of the wicked. Then and not before will the wrath of God be finished.

The Prologue. Chapter 15 is a brief summary or a prologue to chapters 16-20 which describe the judgments of God upon a rebel world because of their allegiance to the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. The visions of the book are about to close and the final picture is of the judgments of God upon a world that has sinned away their day of grace, followed by a new heavens and a new earth which emerges from the ruins of the old. The night of sin is the darkest just before the dawn. The world laden with iniquity dies in terrible convulsions that a new world may be born "wherein dwelleth righteousness".

"The groans of nature in this nether world,
Which heaven has heard for ages, have an end."

The Victors. v. 2,3. Before proceeding to describe the seven last plagues, the angel of prophecy interjects another vision for the comfort and encouragement of the exiled prophet and of all Christian warriors. Before the awful plagues are revealed to the prophet there comes another break in the apocalyptic gloom. The eyes of the prophet are attracted upward to behold the final triumph of the church. "In the darkest days of her long conflict with evil, the church of God has been given revelations of the eternal purpose of Jehovah. His people have been permitted to look beyond the trials of the present to the triumphs of the future, when, the warfare having been accomplished, the redeemed will enter into possession of the Promised Land. These visions of future glory, scenes pictured by the hand of God, should be dear to His church to-day, when the controversy of the ages is rapidly closing, and the promised blessings are soon to be realized in all their fullness."--"Prophets and Kings," p. 722.

Secret of Christ's Victory. "What sustained the Son of God in His betrayal and trial?--He saw the travail of His soul, and was satisfied. He caught a view of the expanse of eternity, and saw the happiness of those who through His humiliation should receive pardon and everlasting life....His ear caught the shout of the redeemed. He heard the ransomed ones singing the song of Moses and the Lamb."--Vol. 8, p. 43,44. It was this very scene that inspired Jesus to pass through the experience of Gethsemene and Calvary to complete the plan of redemption. See Heb. 12:2. The same vision will sustain the remnant during their conflict with the dragon. Their victory is foretold and is therefore certain.

The Translated. These verses picture the living, translated harvest, gathered as the result of the three-fold message of the previous chapter. It is evident that they go entirely through the final conflict because they get the victory over both the beast and his image as well as the character of the beast, the sign of that character, and the number which represents his character. The image of the beast is not fully formed till near the close of probation and not until then is the mark of the beast stamped on those who reject the seal of God. Only those who live through to the very end and are translated can be said to have gotten the complete victory over all these powers. The place symbolized by "a sea of glass" is the pavement of the temple of God on Mount Zion.

Triumph Expressed in Song. Music is the language of thoughts that lie too deep for words. Mere words are not adequate to express the joyful animations of hearts thrilled with the joys of eternal victory. See James 5:13; Eph. 5:19,20. Here are two songs of triumph that blend into one. "When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of grace and redemption. This song will be louder, loftier, and in sublimer strains, echoing and reechoing through the heavenly courts. Thus the song of God's providence is sung, connecting the varying dispensations for all is now seen without a veil between the legal, the prophetical, and the gospel. The church history upon the earth, and the church redeemed in heaven, all center around the cross of Calvary."--T.M. 433.

513 A Great Multitude. The next statement indicates that this song of the living and translated saints will be sung by a great multitude and must represent the same as described in Rev. 7:9. "This is the theme, this is the song,--Christ all and in all,--in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and the Lamb. It is a new song for it was never before heard in heaven.--Id. "An innumerable company" means the same as "a great multitude, which no man could number", which includes both the first-fruits and the general harvest gathered by the three-fold message "of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."

Song of Moses. This song was sung on the shores of the Red Sea just following the glorious deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt and the judgments of God upon their enemies. See Exodus 14 and 15. Ex. 15:1-12 is the song of deliverance. Verses 13-18 are prophetic of the results of this victory on the wicked of other nations; and verses 19-22 is the sequel to the song. The victory of Israel over Egypt was complete and final.

Song of Deliverance. The song of Moses was a song of deliverance from the dragon working through the kingdom of Egypt; the dragon under the dominion of the first of the seven heads. Those who sang the song had just passed through the plagues in which God poured out His wrath upon the Egyptians. They had escaped these judgments through their faith in the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the door post, the sign of the cross of Calvary. To God was given all the glory for the victory over Egypt and the sentence of death. Their song was "unto the Lord; for He hath triumphed gloriously". The song of Moses was sung by those who lives through the final judgments; who faced and escaped by faith the sentence of death; and who witnessed the wrath of God upon their enemies.

Repeated By Remnant. The song of Moses will be repeated by those who live through the final crisis and are translated. This is because the experiences of ancient and modern Israel are parallel. One is typical of the other. See 1 Cor. 10:1-11. "As God called the children of Israel out of Egypt, that they might keep His Sabbath, so He calls His people out of Babylon, that they might not worship the beast nor his image."--"An Appeal to Our Ministers and Conference Committees", p. 16. Written Feb. 18, 1892. "You are following the same path as did ancient Israel."--Vol. 5:75. "We are repeating the history of that people."--Id. p. 160. "That song does not belong to the Jewish people alone. It points forward to the destruction of all the foes of righteousness, and the final victory of the Israel of God."--P.P. 289.

Live Through Crisis. Only those who live through the final crisis including the seven last plagues and the sentence of death can be said to have gone through a similar crisis so as to repeat the same song of experience. Like Israel at the Red Sea, God's remnant people will be under the sentence of death with no apparent way of escape. Their deliverance will come suddenly and on the sea of glass, or, "standing by the sea of glass" (R.V.), they celebrate their triumph by repeating the song of Moses, which ancient Israel sang beside the Red Sea. All glory is given to God for deliverance from the decree of death and redemption through the blood of the Lamb.

Should Study Parallels. "The varied experiences of the Hebrews was a school of preparation for their promised home in Canaan. God would have His people in these days review with a humble heart and teachable spirit the trials through which ancient Israel passed, that they may be instructed in their preparation for the heavenly Canaan."--P.P. 293.

"Too little, far too little is the thought practically entertained, that there is to be another exodus of triumphant (spiritual) Israelites from a darker Egypt, a mightier Pharaoh, a deeper Red Sea."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 256. When this triumph is complete how could it be more appropriately celebrated than by a repetition of the song of Moses?

Song of the Lamb. The song of the Lamb is the song of Calvary, of victory over sin through faith in the blood of Christ. The song of Moses is one of triumph over outward foes; that of the Lamb celebrates victory over sin in the flesh; over inherited and cultivated tendencies to evil; over the sin-nature. This song may have been composed and sung by Christ to celebrate His Calvary victory. Those who live through and are translated pass through a similar experience and can therefore sing the same song. All of the great multitude can sing it but none with as full a meaning as the 144,000.

Justice Acknowledged. v. 3,4. These words doubtless express the sentiment of the two songs. All glory is ascribed to the Lord, "the King of the Ages."--R.V. "The King Eternal"--20th C.N.T. "O King of Nations."-Wey. The songs acknowledge that all His ways are just and true, and that He alone is holy. They sing of God's works and holiness, not their own. The singers predict that even the wicked nations will bow before the Lord and acknowledge His sovereignty and that He was just in His dealings with them. "Because the righteousness of all that thou hast done has been made manifest."--Wey. This will be fulfilled at the close of the millennium when "every knee shall bow" and "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:9,10. "With one voice the loyal universe united in extolling the divine administration."--P.P.70. All doubts are removed and all puzzling questions answered. The Lord's conduct through it all is fully vindicated and the loyal universe approves and worships. "For thy righteous acts have been made manifest."R.V.

The Temple Opened. v. 5-7. This is the same opening of the temple as pictured in Rev. 11:19. It takes place at the close of probation when the seven plague-angels are given their vials and commissioned to pour them out on the wicked world. The seven angels are clothed in the garments of priests because they come out of the temple to pour out an oblation of wrath to the offended holiness and justice of God. Seven represents the complete nature of the wrath divine. "In them is filled up the wrath of God." The angels were "arrayed with precious stones."--R.V. "They were adorned with precious stones pure and bright."--20th C.N.T. Thus was Lucifer arrayed when in his cherubim glory. See Eze. 28:13.

Intercession Ceases. v. 8. Smoke is symbolic of the glory of God. Ex. 19:16-18; 40:34,35; 1 Kings 8:10,11; Isa. 6:1-4; It also represents His wrath and indignation. Ps. 18:7,8. The smoke is doubtless from the censer that is filled with fire when probation closes and the plagues are poured out. Rev. 8:5. It is made clear that the services in the temple cease while the wrath of God falls in the seven plagues. There is no Mediator between God and man and the righteous must stand without an Intercessor.

Memory Text: Rev. 15:3.

Commission of Wrath. Rev. 16:1. "A loud voice from the Sanctuary."--Wey. This is doubtless the voice of Christ who had commissioned the angels to gather the two harvests, one for the garner of God and the other for the winepress of His wrath. By royal decree the angels of wrath and death are sent forth to do their terrible work. The angels of love and mercy are followed by the angels of wrath. Thus it has ever been. The rejection of Noah's message of mercy by the antediluvians resulted in the Deluge. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha mocked Lot and rejected his message, and fire and brimstone was their reward.

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Rejection of Christ. Christ "came to His own, and His own received Him not". Because the Jews rejected their own Messiah and spurned His message they were cut off from being His chosen people. Christ told them that because they knew not the time of their visitation their house would be left desolate. When Pilate attempted to wash his hands of the blood of Christ the Jews assumed the responsibility in the cry, "His blood be on us and on our children." This prayer has been answered. When Titus surrounded Jerusalem at the time of the Passover in A.D. 70 the most terrible siege of all history took place in which women ate their own children, according to Josephus and in fulfillment of Deut. 29:48-68. Josephus estimated that there were 3,000,000 Jews in Jerusalem attending the Passover when the siege began with a food supply sufficient for only a few days.

Awful Slaughter. The number of Jews killed by the sword and famine during this siege has been put at 1,000,000. Thousands who attempted to escape were crucified until there was a forest of crosses on the hills around Jerusalem as a warning to its inhabitants. "They were scourged and tortured, and finally crucified, in full sight of the city. Sometimes as many as five hundred of these miserable beings were caught in a night and were seen in the morning writhing on crosses before the walls. The Roman soldiers, adding insult to cruelty, nailed the bodies in every variety of position to the wood. At length the number of victims was so great that space was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies. Unconsciously the Romans in their cruelty were the instruments of a dreadful retribution. The city which had crucified its Messiah was surrounded with the crucified bodies of its citizens."--"From Exile to Overthrow", John W. Mears, pp. 434, 435.

The Last Message. God's last message to the world carries with it the accumulated light of all previous ages. In proportion to the light given and rejected will be the retribution. Those who hear the three-fold message of Rev. 14 will be more responsible than the people of any previous generation. The judgments on the Jewish nation were mingled with mercy to the individual; those visited on modern Babylon have no element of mercy because the offer of mercy had been spurned and the messengers mocked and persecuted. Under this rejection foul sin ripens to its utmost vileness and must meet its final and eternal doom.

Cause of Divine Anger. God's anger is a righteous indignation against sin. Sin must have a final end but this cannot be done without destroying sinners in whom it dwells and flourishes.

Like righteousness, sin exists only in personalities and together they live or die. All who refuse to separate from sin cannot escape the consequences of a union with that which God hates. To reject God's last message under the power of the Holy Spirit and continue to deliberately worship the beast and his image is a sin of presumption and high handed rebellion that cannot be lightly rewarded.

The Seven Plagues. Plagues are not confined to disease epidemics but include any great disaster more or less universal in its extent. "Calamities, severe trouble or vexations; embarrassments."--Webster. Just as an unfortunate circumstance causes a person to be plagues or embarrassed, so a national or world calamity would constitute a plague or embarrassment. Thus the calamities that befell the Egyptians because they refused to let Israel depart are called plagues. These events greatly vexed and embarrassed Pharoah and the Egyptians. All of God's judgments are similar as indicated by the apparent relation between the ten plagues of Egypt and the seven last that fall on Babylon. It is a belief of the rabbins that "whatsoever plagues God inflicted on the Egyptians in former times, He will inflict on the enemies of His people in later times."--Rabbi Tanchum in "Schoetgen". The one is typical of the other just as the exodus from literal Egypt is typical of the exodus from spiritual Babylon in the last days.

The Seven Last. The language indicates, first, that these judgments will be followed by no other. In them is "filled up", "completed", or "finished", the wrath of God. It also indicates that they will be preceeded by other plagues or calamities that will be mixed with mercy so that "the inhabitants of the land will learn righteousness." There were ten plagues in Egypt; the first three being universal, and the seven last falling upon the Egyptians only. "The severance is a new feature, and one distinguishing the latter from the former plagues."--"Pulpit Commentary." We are not told how many plagues will visit the world in the last days, but the seven last will fall upon the wicked only. To the righteous the promise is: "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."--See Psalms 91. The world war was a plague as was also the influenza epidemic. War, pestilence, famine, and earthquake plagues are predicted as signs of the end. See Matt. 24:7; Luke 21:10,11,25-28.

Follow Close of Probation. That which distinguishes the seven last plagues from those that precede them is that they follow the close of probation when there is no longer a Mediator before the mercy seat. They do not fall till Christ ceases to be Priest and stands up to reign as King. See Dan. 12:1,2. They follow the decree recorded in Rev. 22:11,12. Not until fire takes the place of incense in the golden censer in the hand of Christ do these judgments fall upon the characters with the mark of rebellion.

The First Plague. v. 2. "Evil and malignant ulcer."--F.D. A malignant sore or ulcer is one dangerous to life; one that is virulent. "Loathsome and painful sores."--20th C.N.T. "Noisome, painful ulcers."--Moffatt. This is similar to the sixth plague of Egypt. See Ex. 9:8-11. These sores or boils produced "blains" or blisters. In Deut. 28:27 they are called "the botch of Egypt", which caused an itching sensation and was incurable. Some believe this to have been elephantiasis, black leprosy, or syphilis. The very first manifestation of the wrath of God in the seven last plagues falls upon the rejectors of the last message who defiantly continued to worship the beast and his image and who have the outward sign of a Satanic character.

Blow at Idolatry. The plagues of Egypt were directed at idolatry or creature worship and they revealed the Creator as the only true God. Ex. 12:12. "The Lord would give the Egyptians an opportunity to see how vain was the wisdom of their mighty men, how feeble the power of their gods, when opposed to the commands of Jehovah. He would punish the people of Egypt for their idolatry, and silence their boastingsof the blessings received from their senseless deities."--P.P. 263. The seven last plagues are likewise directed at the idolatry of the last generation. Ours is an age of creature worship; of the boasted wisdom of mighty men. It is an age of science and its attendant nature worship, and the exaltation of the creature above the Creator.

The Plagues of Blood. v. 3,4. "Like the blood of a corpse."--20th C.N.T. These two plagues are similar to the first of the ten plagues of Egypt. See Ex. 7:19-25. The great river of Egypt was worshiped as "the Nile god" and was identified with Ammon. It was also known as "the Father of all the gods". The very life of the nation depended on the Nile with its yearly overflow. Even many of the creatures that lived in its waters were considered sacred and were worshiped. The plagues demonstrated that these blessings came from the Creator and that He could withdraw them. The very life of the modern world depends on the seas, rivers, streams, and fountains of waters. The modern world of commerce and selfishness fails to recognize these blessings as gifts from the Creator on condition of obedience. See Deut. 11:13,14. In His love and mercy the Lord has not withhheld the blessings of nature from the unjust. Matt.5:45. But when mercy has made its last plea and departed, judgments without mercy will cut off the blessings on which life depends.

Awful Judgments. The death of the creatures of the sea and rivers and the attendant stench of their decaying carcasses strewn along their shores, will bring pestilences and conditions which will be indescribable. These plagues are doubtless not universal or of long endurance or they would destroy the entire wicked race. Of the seven last plagues we read: "These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy... But in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy."--G.C. 628, 629.

Righteous Judgments. v. 5-7. "Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they deserve it."--Concordant Version. We are inclined to think these judgments too severe and cruel but it is because we cannot see them from heaven's viewpoint. The angels approve of them and they are far better able to judge than we. We will show wisdom by with-holding judgment till we reach the kingdom and get a vision of sin and rebellion from heaven's viewpoint. Then the redeemed will also unanimously approve of God's dealings with sin and sinners. See Rev. 15:3,4; 19:1,2. When the blackness of sin is fully realized, the righteousness of God's judgments will be manifest to all. The golden rule is true and eternal but the converse is also an eternal law of God. See Matt.7:2. The history of men and nations shows that this rule never fails. Men may deny the existance of God but they cannot deny the operation of His self-acting laws of recompense "according to their works".

Blood to Drink. It is said that when Tomyris, queen of the Sythians, vanquished her enemy Cyrus, she cut off his head and threw it into a vessel of blood, saying: "Satisfy thyself with blood, for which thou hast thirsted; and for which thy desire has been insatiable."--Justin, History, lib. 1, C.8. The wicked upon whom these plagues are poured have thirsted for the blood of the righteous and decreed upon them the sentence of death. Their thirst for blood will be fully satisfied. Also the cry for vengeance from the blood of martyrs will be answered. Rev. 6:10.

Fourth Vial of Wrath. v. 8,9. "Men were severely burned."-Wey. "Men were scourched with intense heat."--20th C.N.T. The sun has been the chief object of worship through all pagan history because of the blessings its light and heat brings to the world. This plagues brings the great famine pictured in Joel 1:15-20. There will doubtless be a gradual increase of droughs and famines leading up to that time. With no food or water the wicked will know that their boycott has failed and the tables have turned. The righteous will be provided with both bread and water. See Isa. 53:14-16. They will also be provided with a covering from the scorching rays of the sun. Isa. 4:5,6. Many today reject God's last message for fear that they cannot make a living if they obey Him and observe His Sabbath. During the plagues the loyal to God will make the best living. Those who consider it embarrassing now to obey the Creator will find it more embarrassing then if they have not obeyed. Those who are far-sighted will choose some inconveniences now in order to be protected then.

Seat of the Beast. v. 10,11. "Throne of the beast."-R.V. The throne of Satan's earthly kingdom under the seventh head is the city of Rome, or the Vatican. "And darkness fell upon his kingdom."-Wey. The power that has kept millions in spiritual darkness and led the world into the Dark Ages, will experience a darkness so intense that it "may be felt". They caused 100,000,000 martyrs to gnaw their tongues for pain and now the eternal law of justice and retribution visits upon them its terrible penalty. In this punishment the sores of the first plague will play an important part. They doubtless continue their torment through all the plagues.

The Papal Kingdom. The tongues of the papal leaders have spoken blasphemies against God, His name, His sanctuary, and His truth; now they punish their own tongues. Darkness falls upon their kingdom and they gnaw their tongues for pain and remorse. The fifth vial falls with its full force upon the ruling class of the papal power, especially on the pretended successor of the meek and lowly Jesus who rules in splendor and extravagance in his capital on the banks of the Tiber. Rome, the center of the world's intrigue, duplicity, pride, pretense, arrogance, craft, diplomacy, and hypocracy, will have filled to her double the cup of sorrow she has filled for others. The robber and despoiler of nations will be robbed of her glory and despoiled. Then it will no more be asked, "Who is able to make war with him?" The question will be fully answered when "great Babylon" comes "in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath."

Memory Text: Rev. 16:5.

THE WAR OF ARMAGEDDON
55

The Sixth Plague. Rev. 16:12. The Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates were the three great barrier rivers by which the Roman legions held back their enemies for centuries. The Euphrates has been the boundary between the peoples on the east and west of it for millenniums. It is a great river, being 1800 miles long, from 200 to 500 yards wide, and from 10 to 30 feet deep. It is navigable for 1200 miles and is fordable by camel in only a few places during low water. It was the eastern boundary of the land promised Israel Gen. 15:18; Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:4. This great river constituted one of the greatest military problems among the ancient nations. The drying up of the channel of the Euphrates by Cyrus was the secret of his success in the capture of Babylon. Isa. 44:27-45; 2. It may be literally dried up during the fourth plague. See Joel 1:20.

Symbolic of Nation. Nations have ever been symbolized by the chief river on which their lives depended. Egypt and the Nile, and Babylon and the Euphrates, have been inseparable. "In 5,000 years of Mesopotamian history, nothing is so obvious as the dependance of the great ruling powers on thir irrigation system. Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Turks stand or fall by their power to control the rivers, and the same problems beset the British mandate today."--"The National Geographic Magazine", January, 1930. Since the 14th century the Ottoman Turks have controlled Asia Minor and the Euphrates valley until some of it was wrested from them during the world war. The Turkish power could very appropriately be symbolized by the Euphrates River.

Moslem Barrier. The Euphrates valley has been held by the Moslems since the Saracens took possession of it in the seventh century. They have constituted the chief barrier of the Christian nations in gaining possession of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. The ten Crusades failed to break through and gain permanent possession. Every effort failed till during the world war when the nations of the west gained a foothold. Regardless of foreign mandates the Moslems are still the dominant influence. However, since the beginning of the 18th century the Turkish power has been gradually but surely drying up, and this it seems, prepares the way for the coming of the "kings of the east" to the Armageddon struggle. "Kings that come from the sunrising". -R.V. These are doubtless the Oriental nations. Japan is known as the nation of "the sun rising" or "the rising sun", and on her standard is the picture of a rising sun.

The Unclean Spirits. v.13. "Four spirits."-20th C.N.T. In September there comes out of the Nile and the swamps of Egypt myriads of frogs known as the Rana Mosaica. They crawl instead of hop and croak constantly and are foul, loathsome creatures. They are supposed to be the same used by the Lord in one of the plagues of Egypt. This illustration is doubtless used by the Revelator because the seven last plagues are antitypical of those that were poured out on Egypt.

Spirits of Devils. v.14. These symbolic loathsome frogs are declared to be "unclean spirits" or "spirits of demons"--R.V. They are evil angels "sent forth into activity by the Dragon Trinity; they are the elect agents to awaken the world to the attempt to abolish God from the earth; and they are frog-like in that they come forth out of the pertiferous quagmires of the universe, do their work amid the world's evening shadows, and creep, and croak, and defile, and fill the ears of the nations with their noisy demonstrations, till they set all the kings and armies of the whole earth in enthusiastic commotion for the final crushing out of the Lamb and all His powers. As in chapter 5, the seven spirits of Christ went forth into all the earth to make up and gather together into one holy fellowship the great congregation of the sanctified; so these spirits of hell go forth upon the kings and potentates of the world, to make up and gather together the grand army of the Devil's worshippers."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p.89.

Their Dwelling Place. This hellist trinity of evil spirits come out of the dragon, beast, and false prophet, representing the three great religious devisions of mankind; Paganism, Catholicism, and apostate Protestantism. Together these systems constitute Babylon, the "habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird."-Rev. 18:2. Just as the Egyptians were deceived by the false miracles of the magicians, so the nations are to be led and deceived by the "lying wonders" of evil spirits. While these "miracles" are performed by demons they use human agents as their mediums. See Rev. 13:13,14; Matt. 24:24; 2 Thes. 2:9-12. As out of Zion the Lord's angels and human messengers go forth to gather the saints, so out of Babylon come the spirits of devils and their human agents to deceive the nations and gather them to the worship of the beast and his image.

A World War. "To gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty."-R.V. We could not conceive of all the nations of the world being gathered to fight a single battle. There will doubtless be many battles but the Revelator describes only the last battle and the place where it will be fought. From the four points of the compass the nations are gathered by Satanic influences to the place of slaughter. From the East comes the kings or nations of the Orient; from the West the nations of the Occident; from the North, Russia and her northern allies; and from the South, the black nations of the torrid zone. "From East and West and North and South they come."

Armageddon. v.16. The word Armageddon means the same as "Megiddo" which is a valley and also a hill and village on the plains of Esdraelon about fifty miles north of Jerusalem. The name is also said to mean "to cut off, to slay", and indicates a place of slaughter. Various names are applied to different parts of this great battlefield such as, "mountain of destruction", "Valley of Jezreel", "Valley of Jehosephat", "Valley of Decision", etc.

Great Battlefield. This great battlefield seems to include a belt across the middle of the Holy Land, if not most of Palestine. Perhaps no other area of the earth's surface has seen so much fighting and bloodshed. The Encyclopedia Americana speaks of it as "the great battlefield where occured the chief conflicts of the Israelites and their enemies." On this battlefield Barak and Deborah defeated and slew the Canaanites with their 900 chariots of iron under the leadership of Sisera. Here also Gideon won his great victory over the Midianites; here Saul was defeated and alsin by the Philistines; Elijah put to death the prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel which is included in this field of slaughter. King Josiah was slain and his army defeated by Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, in this same "valley of decision".

Cross-roads of Earth. Palestine is on the great highways between the three great continents of the Old World. For ages it was the meeting place of the nations for the settlement of their differences on the field of battle. "The vale of Kishon and the region of Megiddo were inevitable battle fields. Through all history they retained that qualification. There many of the great contests of southwestern Asia have been decided.... It was regarded as a predestined place of blood and strife."-- "Egypt in Asia", George Cormack, p. 83. In this place many of the great battles were fought between Assyria, Babylon and Egypt, and the kings of the North and South. Here the fate of nations was decided by the sword.

Close of Probation. v. 15. Christ's coming as a thief is at the close of probation. This verse thrown in here indicates that when probation closes before the plagues begin to fall the spirits of devils are already at work among the nations. Just as soon as Christ's meditorial work ceases the four angels will release the winds of war and strife and the seventh trumpet will sound. Rev. 11:15. The seventh trumpet is the war of Armageddon. The gathering of the nations for Armageddon really begins before probation closes and is in progress during the first five plagues and reaches its climax during the sixth. "As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle."--Vol. 6:14.

Timely Counsel. "Blessed is the man who keeps awake and guards his raiment."-Wey. "Who is on the watch and keeps his clothing at hand."--20th C.N.T. "Who holds his raiment fast."--Moffatt. What is the raiment of those who are waiting and watching for the return of Christ? Rev. 19:7,8. The Jews had an officer called an overseer or praefect who made his rounds during the watches of the night and if he found any of the Levites sleeping on his watch he had the authority to beat him and burn or take away his priestly raiments. His returning home without this sacred vestment was a sign to all of his unfaithfulness. A thief in the night caught the householder unclothed and often stole his clothing. For this reason he kept his clothes near at hand. A sleeping person or church is without the robe of Christ's righteousness. See Isa. 52:1.

The Seventh Plague. v. 17-21. "All is over."--Moffatt. Three times this pronouncement goes forth from the heavenly temple. First, when probation closes and the work of salvation is completed. Second, when the seventh plague is poured out which finishes or fills up the wrath of God. The third and last time is when the wicked are destroyed and the earth renewed to its Eden glory. See Rev. 21:5. Following the announcement, "It is done" there will be "voices, and thunders, and lightnings". "Fierce lightnings leap from the heavens, enveloping the earth in a sheet of flames. Above the terrific roar of thunder, voices, mysterious and awful, declare the doom of the wicked."--G.C.638.

The Earthquake. This same earthquake is described in the following Scriptures: Jer. 4:24-27; Hag. 2:6,7; Eze. 38:19,20; Isa. 2:19. It is the climax of a series of earth-shocks that herald the day of God's wrath. See Luke 21:10,11,26. This quake that takes place as Christ approaches the earth will leave the cities of the earth in ruins and the whole land desolate. Everything will be shaken that can be shaken. Heb. 12:25-27. Only character buildings founded on the Rock of Ages will remain unshaken. "Great Babylon" will feel the full force of the wrath of God. "To make her drink from the wine-cup of His fierce anger."-Wey.

Earth Made Desolate. The whole earth's surface will be left in a chaotic state called the "bottomless pit" or "the abyss" which will be the prison house of Satan and his angels for 1000 years. The great earthquake causes mountains to be shaken down and islands to disappear. "And there was not a mountain anywhere to be seen."-Wey. "The mountains disappeared."--Moffatt. "The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of the hurricane, like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness, are swallowed up by the angry waters....Great hailstones...are doing their work of destruction. The proudest cities of the earth are laid low."--G.C. 637. See Eze. 38:21-23.

✓Great Hailstones. The Jewish silver talent weighed 115 pounds. The Egyptian and Greek talents weighed 86 pounds, and one used at Antioch 390 pounds. The lightest was the Attic weighing 57 pounds. These would be as large or larger than the blocks of ice carried in ice trucks. Josephus declared that the stones thrown by the Roman catapult weighed a talent. The hail would fall with still greater force. Hail stones was one of the weapons used by the Lord against Egypt and again in the conquest of Canaan. It will be the artillery of heaven in the last plague. See Job 38:22,23; Eze. 13:10-15. With the hail will be an electric storm similar to the plague of hail in Egypt and during the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. Psalms 77:16-19. See also Isa. 30:30.

Hailstorms of Past.. Hailstones 17 inches in circumference or "as large as grapefruits" fell at Potter, Nebraska, July 6, 1928. Stones of this size are terribly destructive. In 1914 two missionaries reported hailstones of ten pounds weight in China. A hailstorm took place at Theodore, Saskatchewan, in 1930 when stones the size of grapefruits and larger fell, doing great damage. They went through roofs, killed many cattle, and wounded men and beasts. One stone fell and buried itself in the earth, weighing 120 pounds. No wonder the whole land is left in a chaotic state by this terrific storm and earthquake.

"Like Musket-balls". The following account is of a hailstorm at Constantinople in October, 1831, written by an eye witness; "After an uncommonly sultry night, threatening clouds arose about six in the morning, and a noise, between thunder and tempest, and yet not to be compared to either, increased every moment, and the inhabitants of the capital, roused from their sleep, awaited with anxious expectation the issue of this threatened phenomenon. Their uncertainty was not of long duration; lumps of ice as large as a man's foot, falling singly, and then like a thick shower of stones, which destroyed everything with which they came in contact. The oldest persons do not remember ever to have seen such hailstones. Some ware picked up half an hour afterwards which weighed above a pound. This dreadful storm passed over Constantinople and along the Bosphorus, over Therapia, Bojukden, and Belgrade; and the fairest, nay, the only hope of this beautiful and fertile tract, the vintage, just commenced, was destroyed in a day. Animals of all kinds, and even some persons, were killed, an innumerable number are wounded, and the damage done to the houses is incalculable. The force of the falling masses of ice was so great that they broke to atoms all the tiles on the roofs, and, like musket-balls, shattered planks."

✓ Protection Promised. Isa. 4:5,6. The Lord promises a complete protection to the righteous from the ravages of the seven last plagues. Those who have made the Lord their refuge and fortress and His truth their "shield and buckler", will then be provided "a place of refuge" and a covering "from storm and from rain". The 91st Psalm will then be very precious to those who dwell "in the secret place of the most High" and "abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Memory Text: Rev. 16:15.

BABYLON THE GREAT

56

The Rival Church. Rev. 17:1,2,5. This symbolic woman is the rival and antagonist of the one pictured in chapter 12 which is symbolic of the church of Christ. The one is pure and the other a harlot; the first is hated and persecuted by the powers of earth and the second is loved, flattered, and caressed by them. "The sun-clad Woman is God's great symbol of the visible Church,—the Lamb's Wife....She is not the church of any one period or dispensation, but the entire Universal Church of all time, as Victorinus, the earliest commentator on this Book, held and affirmed, saying: 'The Woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet, is the Church of the Patriarchs, and of the Prophets, and of the holy Apostles'—that is, the Church from the days of Adam and Eve on to the last victory over the worship, name, and mark, of the final Antichrist. What then can this rival Woman be but the organized Antichurch, the pseudo-church, the Bride...of Satan, the universal body and congregation of false-believers and false-worshippers? As Christ has had a visible Church in all time, embodying the wisdom and spirit of heaven, and maintaining the confession of His truth and worship, so has the Devil had a corresponding following in all time, embodying the sensual and devilish wisdom and spirit, and maintaining the profession and teaching of Satan's lies."—"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, pp. 112,113.

World-Embracing Symbols. The language of this chapter indicates clearly that both the woman and the beast embrace the history of the reign of sin with all "the kings of the earth" and "the inhabitants of the earth". All who reject Christ and give their affections to the world, the flesh, and the devil, are a part of Babylon and constitute the great whore or bride of Satan. "By a variety of images the Lord Jesus represented to John the wicked character and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished for their persecution of God's people. All need wisdom carefully to search out the mystery of iniquity that figures so largely in the winding up of this world's history."—T.M. 118.- The "mystery of iniquity" is Satan's religion which is the counterfeit of the gospel or "mystery of godliness". While all in this chapter is not yet clearly understood we are asked "carefully to search out" the significance of its symbols. Light will be revealed to the diligent searcher as it is needed by the remnant of the church.

Purpose of Vision. v. 1. The purpose of this vision is announced by one of the plague-angels which was doubtless the seventh. In a special sense the seventh plague is a manifestation of the unmingled wrath of God upon Babylon the great. Rev. 16:19. As chapter 15 constitutes a synopsis of the seven last plagues, so Rev. 16:17-21 is only a brief summary of the seventh plague which "fills up" or "completes" the wrath of God, the detailed description of which embraces four chapters. Our success in understanding these chapters depends much upon our keeping in mind the purpose of the vision as announced by the angel: "Come with me and I will show you the doom of the great Harlot."—Wey.

The Divine Sentence. "Come here and I will show you the sentence passed upon that Great Harlot who is seated at the meeting of many waters, and with whom all the kings of the earth have had licentious intercourse; while all who live upon the earth have been made drunk by the wine of her licentiousness."--20th C.N.T. God's judgments do not begin till the close of probation. Not until then does He execute His righteous sentence against Babylon. The purpose of chapters 15-20 is to picture the wrath of God upon Babylon in its three great divisions represented by the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

The Great Harlot. Just as a Virgin is used as the symbol of the church of Christ or the true religion, so a harlot is symbolic of the apostate church or religion of Satan. Idolatry and false worship has always been designated harlotry. See Isa. 1:21; Jer. 3:1,3,6-9; Eze. 16:32. The figure is appropriate because fornication and adultery are forms of false affection which prostitutes the most sacred part of the nature to alien purposes. So alienation of the heart's affections and allegiance from Christ is a violation of the most sacred ties that bind a Christian to Christ and is designated spiritual fornication. It includes every form of idolatry or creature worship, and even friendship with the world. James 4:4.

Commentaries. "She is called the great whore because she is of spiritual character and guilty of spiritual infidelity and prostitution. This abominable spiritual conduct consists in copartnership with the godless self-determined political powers of this ungodly, Satan-ruled world."--"Revelation, the Crown Jewel of Biblical Prophecy", Stevens, p. 285.

"Harlotry is the standing symbol in the word of God of a debauched worship, idolatry, and false devotion. When people worship for God what is not God, and give their hearts to idols, or institute systems, doctrines, rites, or administrations, to take the place of what God has revealed and appointed, the Scriptures call it whoredom, adultery, fornication. The reason is obvious. The breaking down of the divine laws and ordinances necessarily carries with it the dishonor of the marriage institution, and hence all supports of godly chastity and pureness. Accordingly all false religions are ever attended with lewdness, even in connection with their most sacred rites."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 113.

Family of Harlots. v. 5. "I am a symbol of great Babylon, the mother of the harlots and of the abominations of the earth."--Wey. "The mother of harlots and all idolatrous abominations upon earth."--20th C.N.T. Babylon is a family name which must include all the forms of false worship with which Satan has enslaved the human family. "The record is that she is herself the great original of all harlotries and abominations of the earth, and many others have sprung from her, and that all the harlotries of time have her for their primal representative and mother. The imagery, therefore, goes back to the beginnings, out of which all false systems, and false worships, and abominations of the earth have come."--Id. p. 115. While Babylon has three principal divisions there have been thousands of sub-divisions.

Origin in Babylon. After the flood idolatry had its origin with Nimrod, the founder of the city and kingdom of Babylon. Hislop says Nimrod was "the first of mortals that reigned and the first that offered idolatrous sacrifices," after the deluge. See Gen. 10:8-10. "Nimrod was a mighty rebel before the Lord, the mightiest rebel before the Lord that ever was in the earth."--The Targum of Jonathan. "The Arab records tell us that he was the first king, and thus the beginner of all kingcraft and tyranny which have since so much oppressed the world. It is said of him that he professed to have seen a golden crown in the sky, and he had one made like it, and that he put it on his own head, and thus claimed to rule in the name and as the earthly impersonation of the powers of the sky, either of Orion or the Sun."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 117.

The Mighty Rebel. "The Jerusalem Targum reads it that he was mighty in sin before the Lord, a hunter of the sons of men, exhorting them to leave the judgments of Shem and adhere to the judgments of Nimrod....And every intimation concerning him shows that he was the Heaven-defying founder of a new system of rule and worship, instituting a government by brute force and earthly wisdom and policy, and a religion which quite abolished the true God, and set men to the adoration of the sun, moon, and stars, impersonated in himself, wife, relatives, and chief consociates, and represented in the idol standards of his kingdom."--Id. p. 119.

A Counterfeit System. "It is a mistake to suppose that idolatry was the gradual growth of well-disposed but unenlightened human thinking. Its rise was sudden. It was conceived in intentional rebellion. It was the invention of a proud and tyrannous ambition at war with Jehovah's commands. It was brought into being to counteract the will and worship of the true and known God. It is the creature and handmaid of power for the deification of 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;' in the place of the Creator. And it originated with old Babylon, and Babylon's first king, the great rebel Nimrod."--Id. p. 119.

The Mother System. "It is also a fact that all the Pagan mythologies and idolatrous devotions the world over, whatever their diversities, show a oneness of character, and an underlying likeness which proves that they are from one original source, and but modifications of but one and the same primal invention, traceable to old Babylon and the Nimrodic plan to defeat the purposes of the God of Noah....Whatever changes or additions came, it still was old Babylon, which ever abides, potent through all the ages, and known to the judgment angels as 'Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth.'"--Id. p. 120. It is evident to any student of ancient and modern pagan and false religions that they are all related and had a common origin in the ancient city and kingdom of Babylon. This is the testimony of all who have made a study of the subject.

Name in Forehead. Name is synonimous with character which is always stamped upon the mind so that it controls the whole being. The character of God is written in the foreheads of His people. Rev. 14:1; 22:4; In the forehead also is written the name of rebellion. See Jer. 3:3; Eze. 3:7,8. The purpose of the building of the city and tower of Babel is given in Gen. 11:3,4. They did make a name that to this day is the symbol of fear, unbelief, and disobedience, out of which Babylon arose, a monument of human efforts to make a "tower, whose top may reach unto heaven."

Salvation by Works. Dan. 4:29,30. The city and religion of Babylon was built on disobedience to God's word, and faith in human works. Idolatry is the exaltation of the creature above the Creator. The basis of all false religions is the glorifying of the creature and his works. "How much she hath glorified herself." Rev. 18:7. "The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin."--D.A. 36. Because this system had its origin in ancient Babylon, that city and kingdom became a type of a world religious counterfeit system which the Revelator designated "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Rev.17:18.

A Persecuting Power. v. 6. "The witnesses of Jesus." R.V., margin. The "saints" and "martyrs" include all the people of God in Old and New Testament times. It includes all who have been martyred throughout the history of sin's cruel reign. See Rev. 18:24. This must include the first martyr, Abel, as well as the last before probation closes. Satan first established his false system through Cain, the murderer of Abel, who built the first city, defied God, and "stood at the head of that great class of men who worship the god of this world."--P.P. 81. The system was re-established after the deluge of Nimrod, the mighty rebel.

Modern Babylon. The mother with her family of harlot daughters continue to the end when they receive of the wrath of God whom they have so long defied, The papal system is mother Babylon in its present form, Rev. Clemance in "Pulpit Commentary" gives fourteen marks of identification showing that the symbolic woman of Rev. 17 is in its present phase the papacy. He says: "In the church of Rome, all the evils of spiritual whoredom are at their utmost height, In no other church in the world is there so much pompt and yet so much carnality. Her wine intoxicates. It is the glamor, the glitter, the pompt, and prestige that attend a church in her connection with the state, that lead men away into a deceptive admiration and even intoxicates them with thoughts of her magnificance and power." The modern family must include apostate Protestantism, or corrupt, backslidden Christianity in all its forms.

The Prophet Amazed. v. 6. "I was filled with utter astonishment."-Wey. "I was amazed beyond measure."--20th C.N.T. In their final exhibition the beast and the harlot woman will astonish the whole world. v. 8. The world today is amazed at the rapid recovery of the papacy from its deadly wound. Rev. 13:3. "And the whole world was amazed and followed him."-Wey. The career of the papal power has evoked the amazement and admiration of many historians. "It has proved to be the most wonderful fabric of what we call worldly wisdom that our world has seen,--controlling kings, dictating laws to ancient monarchies, and binding the souls of millions with a more perfect despotism than Oriental emperors ever sought or dreamed. And what a marvelous vitality it seems to have....It is too grant and venerable for sarcasm, ridicule, or mockery. It is too potent and respectable to be sneered at or lied about....I confess I gaze upon it as a peasant surveys a king, as a boy contemplates a queen of beauty....It is both lofty and degraded; simple, yet worldly wise; humble, yet scornful and proud; washing beggars feet, yet imposing commands on the potentates of earth; benignant, yet severe on all who rebel; here clothed in rags, and there reveling in palaces; supported by charity, yet feasting the princes of the earth; assuming the title of 'servant of the servants of God', yet arrogating the highest seat among worldly dignitaries. Was there ever such a contradiction?-'glory in debasement, and debasement in glory!'--type of the misery and greatness of man? Was there ever such a mystery? so accult are its arts, so subtile its policy, so plausible its pretensions, so certain its shafts? How imposing the words of paternal benediction! How grand the liturgy brought down from ages of faith!...And yet what crimes and abominations have been committed in the name of the church?

"If we go back and accept the history of the dark ages, what wars has not this church encouraged, what discords has she not incited, what superstitions has she not endorsed, what pride has she not arrogated, what cruelties has she not inflicted, what countries has she not robbed, what hardships has she not imposed, what deceptions has she not used, what avenues of thought has she not guarded with a flaming sword, what truth has she not perverted, what goodness has she not mocked and persecuted?... Think of gunpowder plots and inquisitions, intrigues and tortures, all vigorously carried on under the cloak of religion--barbarities worse than those of savages, inflicted at the command of the ministers of the gospel of love....Whether exaggerated or not they were more disgraceful than the persecutions of Christians by the Roman emperors....As for the supreme rulers of this contradictory church, so benevolent and yet so cruel, so enlightened and yet so fanatical, so humble and yet so proud,--this institution of blended piety and fraud...the joy and the reproach, the glory and the shame of the earth,--there never were greater geniuses or greater fools, saints or hounds, scholars and dunces, ascetics and gluttons, men who adorned and men who scandalized their lofty position."--"Beacon Lights of History", John Lord, Vol. 3, pp. 96-101.

Memory Text; Rev. 17:5.

THE QUEEN OF NATIONS

57

Babylon Rules World. Rev. 17:18; 18:7. The harlot woman boasts of her supreme authority as queen over the kings and nations of the world with no prospect of widowhood or sorrow. She is elsewhere called "The lady of kingdoms" and her doom is foretold. Isa. 47: 5-10. She is guilty of unlawful relations with all the kings of the earth. Rev. 17:2. Her proud boast is, "I sit a queen". Where does she sit that makes her feel so secure? In verse 1 she is called the "great whore that sitteth upon many waters". These many waters are interpreted to represent the "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" of earth. v. 15. The ancient city of Babylon was on both sides of the Euphrates whose waters also irrigated the whole city and valley through a network of canals. Jer. 51:13. Ancient Babylon also ruled the world.

On Satan's Throne. Satan is the prince of this world and mother Babylon is his queen. It is through the lady of kingdoms that he has ruled the world. His capital and throne has also been hers. "The Great Harlot who is seated at the meeting of many waters."--20th C.N.T. Satan's religion has always been enthroned at the headquarters of the nations through which he has ruled. He has never founded a state without his religious system seated as queen at its capital. "Which hath a kingdom over the kings of the earth." v. 18. Concordant Version. The Vatican is the throne of Babylon today and is indeed the meeting place of "many waters" or nations. It is again becoming the center of the world's diplomacy and arbitration. More than 35 nations are officially represented before the papal throne and more will soon follow their example.

Papal Claims. At his coronation the triple crown is placed on the pope's head with the words: "Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns and know that thou art Father of princes and kings, Ruler of the world and Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ." Papal boasts of having a kingdom "over the kings of the earth" are many. "The Pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful in Christ, chief king of kings, having plentitude of power, to whom has been entrusted by the omnipotent God direction not only of the earthly, but also of the heavenly kingdom. Whence it is not to be wondered at if to the Roman pontiff,...there have been granted, when just cause demands it, the most complete authority and power of transferring kingdoms, of dashing in pieces scepters, of taking away crowns, not only unsheathing the spiritual but also the material sword."--Ferraris's "Prompta Bibliotheca," article "The Pope".

Sits Upon Beast. v. 3. This indicates a duel relationship with the seven world empires and with all nations. She is not the state but the state church which is upheld and supported by the state. She rules religiously but depends upon the political power of the state for maintenance and power. She is wedded to world empire. "If any church allies itself with an ungodly world-power, leaning on it for support, and gathering its prestige from hence, it is, so far, committing spiritual fornication."--Rev. Clemance in "Pulpit Commentary". See v. 2.

On Seven Mountains. v. 7, 9, 10. Mountains are symbolic of governments or kingdoms. Psalms 30:7; Jer. 51:24,25; Dan. 2:35,44,45. These seven mountains are interpreted to be seven kings or kingdoms in verse 10. A king is often used to represent the kingdom over which he rules. "The king is the state."-Louis, King of France. To Nebuchadnezzar Daniel said, "Thou art this head of gold", and the head of gold represented Babylon as a whole under all its kings. The harlot woman seated on the beast indicates her alliance with and away over the nations and kings of the earth throughout its entire history. She controls them as a rider does a horse. Satan has always controlled the civil powers of earth through his false religion. "Religion in some form or other, is the most universal of institutions and has had the earliest and greatest influence on the condition and life of the people...in every period of the world."--"Beacon Lights of History", John Lord, Vol. 1, p. 27.

The Queenly Attire. v. 4. "Brilliantly attired with gold and jewels and pearls."-Wey. "Glittering with gold ornaments."--20th C.N.T. This is similar to a description of the same power in Jer. 4:28-30. It represents a fallen; backslidden church. Isa. 3:16-26. It is the usual attempt to attract attention by outward adornment where there is no character attraction. "The outside appearance is an index to the heart."-Vol. 1:136. "A person's character is judged by his style of dress. A refined taste, a cultivated mind will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire."--Education, p. 248. What a contrast to the woman symbolizing the church of Christ. Rev. 12:1; 19:7,8; Isa. 52:1. There should be the same contrast between the attire of a worldling and a Christian. The garments of Christ's bride are simple, clean, white, beautiful, attractive and becoming.

Purple and Scarlet. Purple is the royal color worn by kings and queens. Scarlet was until recently the raiment color identifying a harlot. Both of these colors are the most prominent in the robes and caps of the popes, cardinals, and officials of the Catholic church. The Pope's wardrobe is estimated to be worth $100,000,000. It contains the contumes of all the popes. Among them are a few white robes but most of them are purple and scarlet. The shoes are mostly covered with pearls. There is a collection of 14 crowns for various occasions, the smallest being worth $1,000,000.

The Golden Cup. The cup contains the wine of error by which all nations have been made drunken. Jer. 51:7. "The cup held out is golden. To the sensual and carnal heart and imagination the world's religion and progress is something bright and glorious, the glittering fulness of good and blessing. But in that shining cup is only abomination and uncleanness--spiritual prostitution--nothing but spiritual prostitution."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 122. Pope Leo XII, on the occasion of the Jubilee celebration in 1825, had a medal made with his own image on one side and on the other the church of Rome symbolized by a seated woman holding in her left hand a cross, and in her right hand a cup, with the inscription: "The whole world is her seat."

Viewpoint of Vision. v.3. "A great desert"--Swedish, "A lonely place"--20th C.N.T. "Desert" and "wilderness" mean the same. They are translated from a Hebrew word meaning, "to be waste", or "desolate". It is during the millennium that the earth, over which the beast and woman had ruled for 6000 years, becomes a desolate wilderness, desert or lonely place. The previous chapter closed with a description of the coming of Christ which left, the earth desolate and ushered in the millennium. The prophet is taken in vision by the plague angel to the desolate earth during the millennium from whence he looks both ways. He is shown the past career of the beast and woman and then their future doom. From this viewpoint only could he say that the beast "is not".

Further Proof. v.8. "Is about to come out of the abyss and go into perdition."--R.V. "Is about to ascend out of the abyss and go into perdition."--Emphatic Diaglott. "Is destined to re-ascend, before long, out of the bottomless pit and go his way into perdition."--Wey. On two occasions only is the earth a bottomless pit or abyss. (1) Gen. 1:1,2, "abyss"--Sept. Void means "empty, vacant, without inhabitant". It is a lonely place or desert. (2) During the millennium. Jer. 4:23-28; Rev.20. From where the prophet was carried in vision the beast was "about to ascend out of the abyss". The beast ascends out of the abyss or bottomless pit when the wicked are resurrected and Satan is loosed from his prison at the close of the millennium. "Perdition" is the lake of fire and all the wicked go into it at the close of the millennium. 2 Peter 3:7; Rev.19:20; 20:8-10, 14,15. Satan and Judas are each called "the son of perdition", and all the wicked are sons of perdition or destruction. 2 Peter 3:7.

Includes Entire Career. v. 8,11 The statement is three times repeated that the beast existed for a period of time:ceased to exist for another period, and then came into being again before being destroyed. The first and second periods are described by the same language each time. The third phase is described by the statements, "yet is", "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition", and "even he is the eigth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." These must all mean the same, Satan's earthly kingdom, composed of the seven world empires and all the smaller ones and earth's wicked inhabitants, "was", or reigned from the fall of Adam to the second coming of Christ. During this time "the despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world", held dominion without a break. Satan never once ceased to exercise his authority as the "prince of this world".

The Second Period. At one time only can it be truthfully said that the beast with its seven heads and its rider "is not", or does not exist. This time must come between the two stages of its existence, the latter just before it goes into perdition or the lake of fire. During the millennium not a vestige of the beast is in existence. The wicked of earth's history which composed the beast are all dead and Satan and his angels are imprisoned. This cannot apply to the time the papal head was wounded for the wound was inflicted upon only one head of the beast. The beast itself remained unchanged. Then to it cannot be said that a power merely wounded "is not". While the wound seemed at the time to have been mortal the rapid recovery amazed the world and showed that it was only a temporary curbing of his power. The papacy did not cease to exist and the body of the beast remained intact.

Fuller Explanation. v.9. 10. It cannot be said that one head of the beast "is", or exists, while the beast itself "is not", for the head cannot exist separate from the body. Therefore this must be said by way of explanation, not from the viewpoint of the millennium, but from that of the time the prophet was given the vision. At that time the first five heads, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia, had fallen; and Rome, the sixth, was in power. "Preceding Rome the world had but five great names or nationalities answering to imperial Rome, and those scarce a schoolboy ought to miss. They are Greece, Persia, Babylon, Assyria, and Egypt; no more, and no less. And these all were imperial powers like Rome."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 129

The Seventh Head. The last of the seven heads, the religio-political power of papal Rome, had not yet come when the vision was given. "Yet under one head--the papal power--the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses."--Vol 8:182. The prediction is that when he arrives "he must remain a little while." --Emphatic Diaglott. "He must continue a little while."--R.V. "He must stay for a little while."--20th C.N.T. Instead of this statement showing that the reign of the seventh head will be very short it indicates that it will be longer than the others. The papal reign is the longest of the seven. Seven prophecies declare that the papacy would have absolute rulership for 1260 years before the wounding and then would rule again after the wound is healed. The first six reigned between 100 and 500 years each while the papal rule spans more than 1400 years.

The Eighth Phase. v.11. "He counts as an eighth king."--20th C.N.T. "He is an eighth head."--Moffatt. But this eighth phase or head is "of the seven", or an integral part of them. Satan's kingdom after the millennium when the beast "ascends out of the bottomless pit", will be different than any other phase of its existence. It will be made up of all the seven for it is the only time they will all live at the same time. Satan will doubtless take personal control of the vast host of the resurrected wicked. He begins to assume personal leadership after probation closes. See. G. C.624.

Supreme Ruler. "Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy....He claims to be the prince who is the rightful owner of the world....He represents himself to his deluded subjects as a redeemer, assuring them that his power has brought them forth from the grave, and that he is about to rescue them from the most cruel tyranny. Satan works wonders to support his claims. He makes the weak strong, and inspires all with his own spirit and energy. He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints, and to take possession of the city of God---and regain his throne and kingdom."--G. C.663,664.

The Ten Kingdoms. v. 12, 13. "Who have not yet come to the throne." --Wey. "Not yet received their kingdom."--20th C.N.T. This is true from either the viewpoint of the time the vision was given or during the millennium but probably refers to the latter. It is evident that Satan will divide the billions of earth into ten kingdoms and he himself will be the king of kings. The "one hour" doubtless refers to the time between the resurrection of the wicked and their destruction. It doubtless indicates a short but indefinite time. "For a period"--Swedish. "And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings which have not yet received their kingdom, but they shall have authority with the beast as kings at the same time."--Alexander Campbell.

A United Purpose. v. 13, "They have one common policy."--Wey. "They have one mind in surrendering their power and authority to the beast."--20th C.N.T. It is a united kingdom with one common purpose,--to destroy the camp of the saints and possess and rule the kingdom of the world. At no other time has there been such agreement. Only seven of the ten kingdoms of divided Rome gave their power and strength to the beast. Here all ten unite with the beast in willing service. Satan's subjects are then amazed at his kingdom, v, 8. "And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, they whose name hath not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world."--R.V. "Those who are living on the earth shall be amazed."--20th C.N.T. This includes all the wicked who have ever lived and can be fulfilled only after the millennium.

The Object of Attack. v. 14. This is the same attack pictured in Rev. 19:19,20; 20:8-10. The fact that Christ is here called "Lord of lords and King of kings" and His people "are called, and chosen, and faithful", shows that this scene takes place after the close of probation. This war comes at the close of the 1000 years just before the wicked go into perdition. Then all whose names have been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will be with Him. All the "called, and chosen, and faithful" will be together with Christ as Satan and his hosts attack the city, "And they shall share in the victory."--Wey.

The Disillusionment. v. 16, 17, The agreement to carry out a common purpose is only temporary, "For God has put it into their minds to carry out His purpose, in carrying out their common purpose and surrendering their kingdom to the beast, until God's decrees shall be executed."--20th C,N,T. Their agreement continues and they serve Babylon till God's prophecies regarding the beast and Babylon are all fulfilled and His final decrees for their destruction are executed. It is while they surround the holy city, confident of victory, that an event takes place that disillusions them. Their eyes are opened and instead of advancing to the attack they bow their knees and acknowledge that Christ is Lord and that they have been deceived.

The Tables Turn. "The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God, on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven....Satan seems paralized as he beholds the glory and majesty of Christ....Notwithstanding that Satan has been constrained to acknowledge God's justice, and to bow to the supremacy of Christ, his character remains unchanged. The spirit of rebellion, like a mighty torrent, again bursts forth. Filled with frenzy, he determines not to yield the great controversy. The time has come for a last desperate struggle against the King of heaven. He rushes into the midst of his subjects, and endeavors to inspire them with his own fury, and arouse them to instant battle. But of all the countless millions whom he has allured into rebellion, there are none now to acknowledge his supremacy. His power is at an end. The wicked are filled with the same hatred of God that inspires Satan; but they see that their cause is hopeless, that they cannot prevail against Jehovah. Their rage is kindled against Satan and those who have been his agents in deception, and with the fury of demons they turn upon them."--G.C. 668-672. It is then that the nations hate the whore and make her desolate and naked and she is burned with fire.

Memory Text: Rev. 17:14.

THE FINAL CALL OUT OF BABYLON

58

The Last Message. Rev. 18 pictures the last phase of the everlasting gospel that heralds the fall of Babylon and calls God's people out before the wrath divine descends upon her in the seven last plagues. Especially under the seventh plague does Babylon meet her doom. Rev. 16:19. The purpose of the vision of chapter 17 was to show the "doom" or "judgment" of the great harlot. While the wrath of God upon Babylon begins with the plagues, the final sentence is not executed till after the millennium, for it is during the thousand years that the great judgment determines the fate of the enemies of God and His people. "The sentence passed upon the great Harlot" is rendered by the saints who "judge the world and judge angels" during the thousand year judgment period. The execution of that sentence must come afterwards.

Not in Chronological Order. Rev. 18:1. The prophet "saw" the things recorded in this chapter after he had seen the previous vision but this is not the chronological order of their fulfillment. Chapter 18 is thrown in here to make it clear that none of God's people are engulfed in the doom of Babylon. A final world message just before the close of probation is to accounce God's sentence upon Babylon just as the message written in letters of fire on the wall of the banquet hall during the feast of Belshazzar announced His sentence upon ancient Babylon. The entire chapter is a prophecy of the fate awaiting the harlot mother and her daughters which constitutes the reason for the call of God's people to separate from them.

World Message. v. 1. The angel comes down from heaven which shows that it is a heaven-sent message. It was an angel from heaven that announced to the terror stricken revelers the doom of ancient Babylon. The message is given with "great power" or "great authority"-R.V. The world-wide extent of the message is indicated by the fact that the entire earth is lighted with its glory. "And the earth was illuminated by his splendor."-20thC.N.T. Here is pictured the final phase of the three-fold message of Rev. 14 during the latter rain which gives it the power and authority needed to complete its task. Under the outpouring of spiritual power the message is the voice of authority that brings the world to a final and irrevocable dicision. Every honest hearted soul unhesitatingly obeys the call.

The Loud Cry. v. 2. Because the symbolic angel "cried mightily" with a "strong voice", this phase of the last message is often called the "loud cry". The appeal is so strong that all must hear and decide for or against. No longer can any "halt between two opinions" or "go limping between two sides". 1 Kings 18:21, R.V. The negative phase of this message is the announcement that Babylon is fallen with a description of the corruptions that caused her fall and the awful judgments that must be visited upon her as the consequence. This is all preliminary to the positive phase that shows the way of escape, the way of salvation from her sins and plagues.

Babylon is Fallen. "Babylon the great" is the term used. Just before Nebuchadnezzar was deposed from his kingly power and glory, he boastfully cried out as he viewed his works: "This is Babylon the Great."-Dan. 4:30, Sept. "There lies Babylon the Great, which I have built for a royal residence by my vast power and to my noble majesty."--Moffatt. "Great" has the meaning of "large in numbers, dimensions, wealth, powers; proud, arrogant, exalted", all of which applies to spiritual Babylon. "Is fallen" is repeated which would indicate either two falls or a repetition of the message, or both. There is no question that a further fall has taken place since the first announcement of the second angel. Rev. 14:8. Also that message is again repeated during the latter rain.

Message Repeated. "This scripture points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, made by the second angel of Revelation 14, is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, since the message was first given....These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth."--G.C. 603. "The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message, as it swells to a loud cry."-E.W.277.

Habitation of Devils. "Now she is the haunt of demons, the den of all foul spirits, the cage of every foul and loathsome bird."--Moffatt. Ancient Babylon after her fall became the dwelling-place of vultures and other foul birds and doleful creatures. Isa. 13:19-22; 34:11-15. The city became so corrupt that it was beyond recovery and was therefore destroyed never to be rebuilt. The spirits of demons or evil angels had complete control and under their leadership foulness reached its utmost height during the licentious feast of Belshazzar and his lords and ladies. As the church of Christ, or Zion, is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, the angels, and the saints, so Babylon, the church of Satan, is the home or dwelling-place of Satan, his angels, and his subjects. Out of Babylon these foul spirits go forth to seduce and corrupt the world. Rev. 16:13,14. In Matt. 24:28 Babylon is represented by a carcass where the vultures gather and abide.

Cause of Fall. v. 3. "For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are fallen; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness."--R.V. It was by drinking of the wine of her false doctrines that the nations fell, the kings committed spiritual fornication, and the merchants became rich. "For after drinking the maddening wine of her licentiousness all the nations have fallen."--20th C.N.T. "All nations have fallen as a result of the furious wine of her fornication."--Concordant Version. The description is that of the most corrupt and repulsive, moral, spiritual, and social state imaginable. It is not an external and material fall so much as a moral fall as the result of spiritual harlotry. With Babylon all nations fall and are carried with her to eternal ruin.

Includes Whole Family. The announced fall of Babylon includes both the mother and the daughters. The entire system becomes corrupt and the corrupter of kings and nations and the source of wealth of the merchant princes. "And the merchants of the earth are rich as a result of her ability to indulge."-Concordant Version. Satan is the husband of the mother and the father of the daughters. John 8:44. The papal mother is the ancient Babylonian religion continued. Her mysteries, temples, altars, pictures, images, holy water, shrines, and relics, are identical. She has the same supreme pontiff, college of cardinals, celebacy of priests, forty days lent, madonna, purgatory, prayers for the dead, mass, sign of the cross, pretended miracles, and the Sunday Sabbath. "And indeed all writers who are acquainted with antiquity,--be they lay or clerical, Protestant or Papal, Italian or foreign,--agree as to the pagan origin of Rome's present usages and ceremonies."--"Italy", Forsyth, p. 31.

Includes Protestantism. "Babylon embraces much more than Rome, and illustrations of what she is lie nearer our own door. Whereever professedly Christian men have thought the world's favor better than its reproach; wherever they have esteemed its honors a more desirable possession than its shame; wherever they have coveted ease rather than welcomed suffering; have loved self-indulgence rather than self-sacrifice...there the spirit of Babylon has been made manifest."--Prof. Milligan in "Baird Lectures on Revelation", Lecture 5. Babylon includes all forms of corrupt Christianity that are guilty of spiritual fornication by a union with the world and the state.

Modernism Hastening Fall. There has been a mighty change since the second angel's message was first preached. Modernism has permeated Protestantism until even the great fundamentals of Christianity are denied and "Jesus has become a faint and wavering shadow."--William Henry Spence in "A Modernist's Criticism of Modernism". "The church today has been unfaithful to her Lord by admitting great companies of non-Christian persons, not only into her membership, but into her teaching agencies....The Greatest menace to the Christian church today comes not from the enemies outside, but from the enemies within....Whether or no liberals are Christians, it is at any rate perfectly clear that liberalism is not Christianity....If the liberal party therefore, really obtains control of the church, evangelical Christianity must be prepared to withdraw no matter what it costs. Our Lord died for us and we must not deny Him for favor of men."--"Christianity and Liberalism", Machen, pp. 159-166.

"Until conventional Christianity is banished from the land, and the Christianity of the sermon on the Mount is restored, the moral condition of the human race will sink lower and lower into devildom and corruption."--Rev. Thomas in "Pulpit Commentary".

Positive Phase of Message. v. 4, 5. It is doubtless the voice of Christ that calls His people out of Babylon. The Lord cannot destroy Babylon till His people are safe. Before the destruction of Sodom He said to Lot: "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither." Gen. 19:22.

Before the Lord poured His wrath upon ancient Babylon He sent a message calling His people out. Isa. 48:20; Jer. 51:6,7. The same was true before Jerusalem was destroyed in A. D. 70.

Examples of Past. "Before the destruction of Sodom, God sent a message to Lot, 'Escape for thy life'...escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed.' The same voice of warning was heard by the disciples of Christ before the destruction of Jerusalem. ...There was a coming out, a decided separation from the wicked, an escapt for life. So it was in the days of Noah; so with Lot; so with the disciples prior tothe destruction of Jerusalem; and so it will be in the last days. Again the voice of God is heard in a message of warning, bidding His people separate themselves from prevailing iniquity."--P.P. 166,167. "Souls that were scattered all through the religious bodies answered the call, and the precious were hurried out of the doomed churches as Lot was hurried out of Sodom before her destruction." --F.W. 279.

Complete Separation. 2 Cor. 6:14-18. There came a time when God's people could no longer serve Him and remain in Egypt and they must make a complete separation. A similar time comes with modern Babylon. When evil reaches a certain stage further fellowship with the evil doers means to share in their sins and thus in their punishments. Babylon reaches the condition of Rome when the poet said: "Ye who desire to live a godly life, depart from Rome; for, although all things are lawful there, yet to be godly is unlawful." This is almost the condition now and will be to a pre-eminent degree before probation closes.

Why Called Out? To escape her sins that they might escape her plagues and judgments. "Her sins are heaped up forthe heavens."-20th C.N.T. "Piled up to the sky."-Wey. "For high as heaven her sins are heaped and God calls her misdeeds to the reckoning."--Moffatt. Babylon built a tower to reach unto heaven which was a symbol of her pride and self-exaltation which preceded her fall. Jer. 49:16; 51:53; Obadiah 3, 4.

"My People". "Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion....The time will come when those who love God supremely can no longer remain in connection with such as are 'lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.' Revelation 18 points to the time when,..the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God....that remain in Babylon will heed the call, 'Come out of her, My people."--G.C. 390. "Every truly honest soul will come to the light of truth."--Id. p. 522. "And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith."--Id. p. 383. It is evident from these statements that the majority of God's people will still be in Babylon when the latter rain begins and the message goes forth under the loud cry.

Righteousness by Faith. The message of righteousness by faith "is the third angel's message in verity" and must therefore constitute the positive phase of the final call for God's people to come out of the religious systems of self-glorification and human works. "Clad in the armour of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict."--P.K. 725. "The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth."--R.H. Nov. 22, 1892. Quoted in C.O.R. 72.

Final Preparation. "The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel."--Vol. 6:19. "Only those who are clothed in the garments of His righteousness will be able to endure the glory of His presence when He shall appear with 'power and great glory.'"--R.H. July 9, 1908. Quoted in C.O.R.123.

"On Christ's coronation day, He will not acknowledge as His any who wear spot or wrinkle or any such thing. But to His faithful ones He will give crowns of immortal glory. Those who would not that He should reign over them will see Him surrounded by the army of the redeemed, each of whom bears the sign, 'THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'"--R.H. Nov. 24, 1904. Quoted in C.O.R. 123.

Memory Text: Rev. 18:1.

THE DOOM OF BABYLON

59

Spiritual Devolution. The announcement that "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" indicates that she was once on a higher spiritual plain; that she had experienced a spiritual and moral devolution. Satan and his angels once abode in the truth. John 8:44. Cain was at one time faithful; the descendants of Noah worshiped the true God before their apostasy; the Jews were once God's chosen people; the apostolic church was once pure in faith; and Protestantism was once the instrument in the hand of God in wounding the papal head of the beast. The history of the church has been marred by many apostacies out of which the Lord had to call the faithful. There has ever been a fall from virtue to vice, truth to error, liberty to thraldom, from a divine to a Satanic character. The most hardened criminals and the vilest men and women were once innocent children. Babylon sinks to a depth of shame and degradation from which there is no retreat.

Eternal Rule of Justice. v. 6, 7. Jer. 51:24, 49. "Double" as here used means an exact duplicate and not twice as much, which would not be justice and would be out of harmony with the other expressions used. What Babylon gave, she is to receive. Her own persecutions of the saints of God are to be duplicated and returned upon her own head in retribution. "For her self-glorification and her luxury, give her now an equal measure of torture and misery."--20th C.N.T. The two golden rules are given in Matt. 7:2,12. The prophet's message to wicked Jezebel was: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." 1 Kings 21:19. "In condemning others, they are passing sentence upon themselves, and God declares that this sentence is just. He accepts their own verdict against themselves." "Evil imparted, also returns again."--M.B. 179, 194.

Boast of Security. v. 7, The true church awaits her returning Lord and husband when she will sit with Him on His throne. The apostate church unites with the kings of earth and revels in luxury as their queen with no thought of widowhood or sorrow. "Children of the Church, fear nothing, happen what will to her. Christ is with her and therefore she cannot sink....Has she not gone steadily on her course amid storm and sunshine? The fulfilment of the past is the best security for the future."--"Faith of Our Fathers", Cardinal Gibbons, p. 60.

Boasting Precedes Ruin. v. 8. At the moment of her greatest glory Babylon is on the brink of ruin. She does not recognize and glorify God and the one element of permanency is wanting. The fate of Babylon comes suddenly and unexpectedly. Like the proud king of ancient Babylon, while the words of boasting were still on his lips, the heavenly watcher pronounced the sentence of the Most High. The fall of ancient Babylon came suddenly to a proud and arrogant ruler and people. Jer. 51:8. In Isa. 47:5-10 it declares that the destruction would come "in one day" and "in a moment in one day". Suddenly also comes the doom of modern Babylon.

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Period of Judgments. "In one day". "In one hour is thy judgment come."-v. 10,17,19. This doubtless indicates a short, indefinite time like the statement, "The hour of His judgment is come." The death, mourning, famine, and fire, must include the judgments of God both before and after the millennium. She is "utterly burned with fire", when her final destruction is accomplished in the lake of fire. "She thought herself strong; she forgot the strength of the Almighty. Her plagues were four-fold, as though from every quarter her trouble came. Death for her scorn of the prospect of widowhood; mourning for her inordinate reveling; famine for her abundance; and fire, the punishment for her fornication."--Dean Alford in "Speaker's Commentary".

The Mourning Kings. v. 9, 10. This entire chapter is a prophecy and a part of the final message announcing the approaching doom of Babylon. The language is highly figurative, the symbol being that of the burning or destruction of a literal city that had been the source of wealth and glory of kings and merchants. The kings that reveled with her bewail her fall. They speak of her as "that great city, Babylon, that mighty city". "The whole passage points, not to any single city, at any one single period, but to the world-city, throughout all time."--Dean Alford in "Speaker's Commentary".

The Queen of Nations. Semiramis, the wife of Nimrod, was the first queen of Babylon. After the tragic death of Nimrod she reigned supreme. She was beautiful but corrupt in morals, and reveled with kings and princes. The symbolic queen and harlot of the Apocalypse is doubtless a likeness of the woman who was more responsible than any other for the invention and establishment of the counterfeit religion of Babylon which has ever since ruled the world. Cleopatra is also an appropriate symbol of Satan's religion. She enticed and enslaved both Caesar and Mark Antony and lived luxuriously with them. Dr. John Lord selects her as "The Woman of Paganism", or the type of pagan womanhood. He calls her "a selfish, heartless, sorceress" with "no moral sense", "a politician as well as a luxurious beauty." See "Beacon Lights of History", Vol. 2. Thus did Babylon, "the lady of kingdoms", entice and enslave the kings and nations of the world by her sorcery, luxury, and licentiousness.

World of Commerce. v. 11-14: Babylon is not only a religious but a commercial harlotry. Modern commerce is leading the world away from God to the worship of the creature and his works. To permit business to come between a man and his God is just as wrong as to allow a priest of false religion to separate a man and God. Some of the greatest temptations to sin lie in the business relations of life. "As a nail sticketh fast between the joinings of stones, so doth sin stick close between buying and selling."--Sirach in Ecclesiasticus. Babylon the great has not only ruled kings and nations but has largely controlled commerce. The church festivals have been so commercialized that they constitute one of the chief sources of revenue for the merchants of earth. "The merchants of the earth are rich as the result of her ability to indulge." v. 3. Concordant Version.

Reveling in Luxury. Here is pictured the dainties, the personal adornment, the expensive furniture, and the luxuries of the modern church and society. Earth's inhabitants are the slaves of both religion and business. Both the bodies and the souls of men are enslaved by the universal acceptance of modern business maxims which involve a fearful trifling with the conscience. Present day labor organizations destroy civil liberty, and religious freedom cannot live under the rulership of church officials and systems that are more zealous in maintaining the traditions of the fathers than to know the will of God. The bodies and souls of the world's inhabitants are slaves to the customs, fashions, creeds and organizations of modern Babylon. "The Catholic church deals in human souls."--Cardinal O'Connell, Literary Digest, May 7, 1932.

Business Depression. v. 15-17. The picture is that of a world wide commercial depression or business panic which brings lamentation and weeping on the part of the merchant princes of earth. The destruction of Babylon is symbolized by that of a great and wealthy city whose extravagance and luxury made the merchants rich. The cutting off of their source of revenue causes great consternation. This was the effect on the merchants when the wicked and luxurious cities of Sodom and Gomorrha were destroyed, and when Nineveh, Babylon and Tyre were reduced to ruins. When Rome, the metropolis of the world, was captured, sacked, and burned by the barbarians, there was a weeping among the commercial men of the world, as there had been when Nero burned the city years before. The sudden destruction of London, Paris, New York, or Chicago, would affect the income of every merchant prince of the world.

Another Picture. James 5:1-6 doubtless pictures the same scene. Those who have lived in pleasure and wanton luxury will weep and howl because of their miseries caused by the depression. Luxuries are today the chief source of wealth because of the universal indulgence of them and the percentage of profits they bring. Thomas H. Briggs of Columbia University said that the American people spend $23,000,000,000 a year for luxuries out of an income of $61,000,000,000, or two dollars out of every five. He defined luxuries as "articles not strictly necessary".

The Maritime World. v. 17-19. The great financial panic will tie up the merchant marine with its commerce on the high seas. Great ship companies will be forced to the wall and the captains and sailors will weep and wail because their liberal incomes, "by reason of her costliness", will be cut off. Again it is stated that "in one hour" Babylon is made desolate. All who put their trust in riches and are controlled by the rule of gold rather than the golden rule will be among the mourners when Babylon is destroyed. There is a different scene among those who are rich toward God.

Great Rejoicing. v. 20. When ancient Babylon was captured and destroyed the Hebrew captives and the remnant in Palestine were jubulant. They knew from the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, that the destruction was a judgment from God. All the nations who had been oppressed by Babylon also rejoiced. Jer. 51:48. There will likewise be great rejoicing in heaven and on earth when modern Babylon is destroyed. "Ye saints, and ye apostles and ye prophets."--R.V. The apostles and prophets are the most prominent leaders in both Old and New Testament times. This rejoicing is further pictured in the next chapter which describes the greatest thanksgiving celebration ever held.

Goes Down Forever. v. 21. The same illustration was used regarding ancient Babylon. Jer. 51:63,64. The city was never to be rebuilt or inhabited again. Isa. 2~~6~~5:2. Babylon sinks to rise no more just as Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea "sank unto the bottom as a stone" and "as lead in the mighty waters". See Ex.15:4,5,10. The destruction of the Fgyptians at the Red Sea was typical of the final destruction of Babylon. For that reason the song of Moses will be repeated by those who escape and witness the final destruction. "In every form in which she has existed, and through all the ages, in all the world, she has been holding up the golden cup of her abominations wherewith she has intoxicated and demented the nations, and filled the whole earth with spiritual madness. Therefore, to her neck the stone is hanged, and into the depth she is cast."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 175. "Thus with violence"--"suddenly". This could meet its fulfillment in a revolution which would ruin business as in Russia. Most revolutionists are anti-religionists.

The Reign of Silence. v. 22,23. See Isa. 47:5; 24:7-12. "She was the very paradise of musicians, harp-singers, and flute-players, and trumpeters; for these are always a great feature and one of the chief glories of a rich, gay, luxurious, and worldly city; but every note is silenced, and no voice of song, or dance, or opera, is ever heard there again. The finest artists and artisans of the world, of every order, had found there a very Golconda, but in one hour their glorious elysium is gone, and they and their works with it. It was the center of the grandest and most noted of bridals, and the sublime resort of grand bridal tours, but with one stroke of heaven's judgment every sound of joy is hushed, 'and the voice of bridegroom and bride' ceases to be heard there any more."-Id.p.177.

Deceived by Sorcery. v. 23. Ancient Babylon was the birth place of sorcery and magic. Isa. 47:13-15. "That magic and idolatry were twin sisters, and came into the world together, we have abundant evidence."--"The Two Babylons", Hislop, p. 67. "Mediaeval magic and witchcraft were, in a large part, an unchanged inheritance from Chaldea."--"Myers General History", p. 46. Sorcery is spiritism in its modern form which has its headquarters in Babylon. Rev. 16:13; 18:2. Monsiur Jacolliot, Chief Judge of the French Colony of Crandenagur, India, conducted a series of experiments with the native fakirs, and then wrote a book describing the results. He said that the fakirs claimed that their phenomena was done by the spirits. "They claimed that these powers were handed down from time immemorial and traced back to the Chaldees." --"The New Revelation", Arthur Conan Doyle, p. 29.

Place of Martyrdom. v. 24. "All that have been slain upon the earth."-R.V. "All who have been put to death on the earth."--Wey. This is conclusive proof that Babylon embraces the entire history of the reigh of sin from the martyrdom of Abel, the first saint to die for his faith, to the last before probation closes. This explains the statement of Jesus in Matt. 23:34-36. It has been the same cruel system and Satanic spirit that has persecuted and martyred the saints down through the ages.

Memory Text: Rev. 18:4.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

60

Victory Celebration. Rev. 19:1-3. The previous chapter pictured the awful doom of Babylon including the whole wicked world. The assurance is given that all of God's people will be called out and will escape her plagues. Now follows a picture of those who escape, celebrating their victory. "After this" doubtless refers to the events previously described. After the prophet was shown the defeat and destruction of Babylon, the church of Satan, he was given a view of the church triumphant on the sea of glass celebrating their triumph. Several times in the Apocalypse, after the darkest scenes, we are given a view of the final triumph of Zion over her rival Babylon. See Zeph. 3: 13-17. "He hath cast out thine enemy." Who has been the enemy and rival of Zion down through the ages? Zech. 2:7.

A Great Multitude. "The far echoing voices of a great multitude."-Wey. "The shout of a great host."--Moffatt. "The great shout from a vast throng in heaven."--20th C.N.T. This is doubtless another view of the same multitude and scene as presented in Rev. 7:9-12 and 15:2-4. "Voice" is in the singular indicating perfect harmony and unity on the part of those who take part in the triumph. What a pleasant contrast to the confusing noises and many voices of Babel. What a relief will be the harmonies of this celebration after the weeping, wailing, and lamentations of the kings, merchants, and all the wicked, over the fall of Babylon. Revelation is indeed a book of contrasts.

The Hallelujah Chorus. "Alleluia" or "hallelujah" is an expression of great joy. This is the only place the word is used in the New Testament and here it is repeated four times. The term is borrowed from the Psalms, fifteen of which begin or end with "Hallelujah". Most of the hallelujah Psalms refer to the culmination of this earth's history when the church triumphs over her enemies. How thrilling will be the alleluia chorus after the woeful lamentations which immediately precede it. In this chapter Handel got his inspiration when he wrote the "Hallelujah Chorus" of his oratorio, "The Messiah". He spent much time in meditation endeavoring to reproduce in his mind the whole scene and the joy and gladness of the glorified as they ding of their triumph. This great music production was finished in 1741 A.D. The finest, and most lofty, sublime, and inspiring music was produced during the Reformation period when the world was passing through great spiritual struggles.

Song of Experience. All Bible songs are more than mere melodies; they are messages expressing thought and sentiment. They are born of experience and commemorate great events and victories. The creation of this world was celebrated and commemorated by song. Job 38:4-7. The victory of Israel at the Red Sea was celebrated by the song of Moses. Fx. 15. The Psalms of David and others were produced out of the actual experience of the authors. The birth of Christ was celebrated by an appropriate song by the angelic chorus over the hills of Judea. The Calvary victory can never be forgotten because of the song of the Lamb.

Heart Music. The songs of the redeemed do not come from the lips only; they eminate from joyful hearts. The only sermons or songs worth listening to come out of the heart and give expression to a living experience. Others may be perfect in harmony and technique but because there is no message that appeals to the heart they are "like sounding brass and tinkling cymbals." Music is the language of the heart and unless the heart speaks there is no music. The skillful but mechanical music of the temple service was an offense to God. Amos 5:21-23.

Celebrates Babylon's Fall. This celebration is the response to the injunction of Rev. 18:20. The praise breaks forth as soon as Babylon sinks to her doom and the righteous reach the sea of glass. It will be repeated again after Babylon's final destruction in the lake of fire. See v. 3. Viewing Babylon and the terrible judgments that befall her from heaven's viewpoint the righteous are able to say: "True and righteous are His judgments." If God's judgments seem cruel to us now it is because of our limited vision of the awful character of sin.

✓ Other Participants. v. 4-6. The "Amen" of the 24 elders indicates that the reign of sin is over for which they praise the Lord. The voice from the throne is doubtless that of Christ who calls for universal thanksgiving on the part of all who fear God. All "glory, and honor, and power" is to be given "unto the Lord our God". There will be no honoring or glorifying of self among the redeemed. "None but God can subdue the pride of man's heart. We cannot save ourselves. We cannot regenerate ourselves. In the heavenly courts there will be no song sung, To me that loved myself, unto me be glory and honor, blessing and praise. But this is the keynote of the song that is sung by many here in this world."--T.M. 456.

✓ The Mighty Response. v. 6. The oratorio of heaven, or the hallelujah chorus of the redeemed swells to its climax when every voice joins in a praise song that rolls through the universe with the majesty of the sound of "many waters" and of "mighty thunderings". The rendering of Handel's Messiah by a large chorus accompanied by a symphony orchestra, was described as follows: After a brief death-like stillness the bass singers sang, "For He shall reign forever and ever," Then the altos repeated it in a higher key. Then the tenors lifted it as if to the skies and repeated it again. Then the sopranos as if inspired sang, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," In answer to the question, "How long shall He reign?", with united voice came the response, "Forever and ever, forever and ever", Then as if enraptured by the glory of the occasion the entire chorus shouted: "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

Thy Kingdom Come. Then the prayer will be fully answered, "Thy Kingdom come." "For the Lord God has become King."--Wey. The family on earth is united with the family in heaven; the pilgrims of earth have reached their eternal home; the soldiers of the cross have concluded their warfare and are welcomed home to celebrate their triumph. The blood-washed throng cast their crowns at the feet of Christ, the Lamb, and praise Him for His Calvary victory. In connection with this great antitypical Feast of Tabernacles will take place the impressive scene of the meeting of the two Adams, when the second Adam will restore to the first Adam his family and dominion. See G.C.647,648.

Marriage of the Lamb. v. 7. Here is one reason for the vast gathering and glorious celebration. It is the final and eternal union of Christ, the Bridegroom, and His bride, the church. Isa. 54:5,6; 2 Cor. 11:2. The fall of Babylon was one of the preliminaries to heaven's great bridal-day. Chapter 18 pictures the end of the daughter of Babylon with her marriage festivals, music and dancing; chapter 19 pictures the triumphant Lamb and his bride and their marriage festival. Christ had long loved and wooed His bride and had often been separated from her. His rival sought her affections and allegiance and often seemed on the verge of success. But in the last days Christ wins her whole heart. Long and patiently He had waited and wooed and finally the wedding day arrives. He presents His bride to the Father "with exceeding joy" and the Father accepts her and loves her "as He loves His Son".

The Church. "Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also the symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church, of which, as His chosen one, He says, 'Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee."---M.H. 356.

"In both the Old and New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall bring Home His bride to the Father's house, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the marriage supper ofthe Lamb. He says, 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoive over thee.' 'Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken;...but thou shalt be called My Delight,...for the Lord delighteth in thee.' 'He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing.' When the vision of the heavenly things was granted to John the apostle, he wrote, 'And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.'. 'Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'"--D.A. 151. See also G.C. 381, M.B. 100.

The Holy City. In Rev. 21:9,10, "the bride, the Lamb's wife" is said to be "that great city, the New Jerusalem". This is no contradiction as the church has been called Zion and Jerusalem throughout all ages because that city was so long the headquarters and home of God's people, and the New Jerusalem will be the home and capital city of the church triumphant through all eternity.

For the same reason Satan's church or bride is called "Babylon, that great city." "It is called the Bride, because it embraces the Bride, and because it is the Bride's everlasting home and residence." "The ancient saints looked for a city whose maker and builder is God. That city John saw and describes in a subsequent chapter. That city was shown him as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, so called on account of those who inhabit and dwell in it."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol, 3, pp. 222, 229.

Made Herself Ready. "Prepared herself". Douay. The church is not ready for the coming of the Bridegroom till all God's people are called out of Babylon and have on the wedding garment. The Laodicean church is not ready till she accepts the counsel of the Bridegroom and obtains from Him the gold of faith and love, the robe of His righteousness, the spiritual anointing, and opens the heart's door and lets Him in to rule and reign. "Prepare to meet thy God" is the call of the final heaven-sent message.

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The Wedding Robe. v. 8. "The righteous acts of saints."--R.V. "The justification of saints."--Douay. The acceptance of the message of righteousness by faith clothes the church with the wedding garment that is without spot or wrinkle. Eph. 5:25-27. It is a life of perfect obedience to the law of God which is written in the heart and mind through the indwelling of Christ through the Spirit. See Deut. 6;25; Isa. 51:7,8; Rom. 8:3,4. "By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess. To the church is given 'that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,' "not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing'. The fine linen, says the Scripture, 'is the righteousness of saints.' It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour....Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided, can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul."--C.O.L. 310, 311.

Received From Bridegroom. Rev. 3:.8. "To her was granted." The bride makes herself ready by permitting Christ to make her ready. Without Him she could not make herself ready and without her love and consent He could not make her ready. She works out her own salvation by letting Him work in her both to will and to do of His good pleasure. "This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us."--Id. p. 311.

Beautiful Garment. Isa. 52;1; 61:10; Rev. 12:1. "Fine linen, shining and spotless."-Wey. "Glittering and white."--Douay. The Jews had three kinds of linen. (1) The ordinary linen used by the priests in their ordinary work. (2) The "fine linen" used in the curtains of the Sanctuary and worn by the high priest when clothed in the "garments of glory and beauty." (3) The choicest of all and of a glistening white and dazzling appearance. Was worn by kings and the great on important occasions. It was the symbol.

of joy and triumph. It was worn by David when the ark was brought to Jerusalem; by the priests and Levites on the occasion of the dedication of the temple; and by Mordecai when he became prime minister. See 1 Chron. 15:27; 2 Chron. 15:12; Esther 8:15. This is the kind of linen referred to in our text. See also Mark 9:3.

The Marriage Supper. v. 9. "Marriage banquet."-Moffatt. As soon as Christ presents the bride to the Father and the request of John 17:24 is granted, and the marriage ceremonies are complete, then comes the wedding supper or marriage banquet. "Soon we heard His lovely voice again, saying, 'Come My people, you have come out of great tribulation, and done My will; suffered for Me; come to supper, for I will gird Myself and serve you. ...And I saw a table of pure silver; it was many miles in length, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the tree of life, the manna, almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes and many other kinds of fruit."--E.W. 19.

The Invitation. "Blessed are those who receive an invitation."-Wey. "Who are invited."--Emphatic Diaglott. The invitation to attend this marriage and banquet comes to all with the gospel message. See Matt. 22:1-14. "Many are called; but few are chosen." In this marriage the guests make up the bride. It may be that the 144,000 will in a special sense be the bride as they are to go with the Lamb "whithersoever He goeth". If this is true then all others are guests. This will be the greatest celebration of rejoicing in the history of the universe and to it all are invited who will put on the robe of Christ's righteousness. This celebration will begin following the second advent and will be repeated or continued after the lake of fire has destroyed the wicked and the earth is restored to its Eden beauty and becomes the eternal home of the saved.

Memory Text: Rev. 19:7.

THE HOLY WAR

61

Gabriel Refuses Worship. Rev. 19:10. John was so enraptured by the glory of the vision that he fell down before the angel to worship him. What a contrast between the spirit of Lucifer and Gabriel. Both are created beings who have no right to accept worship, yet Lucifer offered Christ this world and its glory and dominion if He would fall down and worship Him. Prophecy is the exclusive prerogative of God and therefore all prophecy is His testimony. As Jesus is the spokesman of the Godhead the writings of all the prophets is the testimony of Jesus Christ "the faithful and true witness". The Holy Spirit, through Gabriel the angel of prophecy, revealed this testimony to the human medium.

The White Horse. v. 11. Here Christ is pictured in military aspect. On a white horse He rides forth conquering and to conquer. White is symbolic of justice and righteousness. To the church Jesus is the minister of righteousness and salvation, and is presented as the Priest of the Sanctuary and the Lamb of God, the symbols of service and sacrifice. To the wicked in rebellion He is a mounted warrior, the minister of righteous retribution. The white horse and rider of Revelation 6 represents the success of Christianity at the beginning of the Christian era. Here is pictured the last charge of Christ and His army against the hosts of evil. The horse is symbolic of strength, swiftness, daring, and endurance. The picture is that of a victorious general leading a victorious army into battle.

A Righteous War. The general is not a greedy, selfish, ambitious and cruel conqueror, who wages way for self-glory and self-aggrandisement. He is the "Faithful and True" judge and warrior. He fights in a just cause with an unselfish motive; not for the glory of conquest but to put down a cruel and dangerous revolt. It is truly a holy war conducted in justice and righteousness. Justice and righteousness have been almost unknown in the wars between the nations of earth. Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, and others, were willing to sacrifice millions of lives and destroy and bankrupt nations for personal glory and agrandisement.

His Flaming Eyes. v. 12. To judge righteously Christ must see all. His piercing, penetrating gaze searches all depths and looks through all masks and penetrates the deepest darkness. Nothing escapes the vision of the omniscient Rider of the white horse as He leads His army to a righteous victory. His eyes not only see all but they blaze with righteous indignation against sin and those who refuse to separate from it. Christ's eyes blaze with a broad and deep vision, a penetrating intelligence, a fervent love for righteousness, and a hatred for iniquity.

Many Crowns. "Many kingly crowns."-Wey. He is not only a judge and a general but also a King. The many crowns or diadems indicate victory in many battles and the conquest of many nations. It was the custom for kings to wear the diadems of their vanquished foes. When David conquered the Ammonites and captured their king he placed the crown on his own head with the crown that represented his sovereighty over the kingdom of Israel. 2 Sam. 12:30.

When Ptolemy entered Antioch he put two crowns on his head, the crown of Egypt and the crown of Asia. 1 Macc. 11:13. The Pope at his coronation is crowned with a triple crown indicating his sovereignty over the spiritual, temporal, and infernal kingdoms. The Pope has 14 crowns for various occasions. The great red dragon has seven diadems and the leopard beast has ten crowned horns. An accumulation of crowns represent many dominions or sovereignties. Christ is King of Kings.

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A Bloody Conflict. v. 13. In the ancient mode of warfare when soldiers fought hand to hand the victor often emerged from the battle covered with wounds and his garments sprinkled with his own and his enemies' blood. In Isa. 63:1-4 Christ is described as emerging victorious from two bloody conflicts, one when He conquered sin at His first advent, and the other when He destroys His enemies at his second advent. In the first He would tread "the winepress alone" and come from the battle "red" in His "apparel". In the Garden of Gethsemene and on the cross of Calvary the garments of Jesus were dyed red as the result of the bloody sweat, the scourging, the crown of thorns, and the crucifixion. The second conflict is when He tramples upon the wicked in His fury. "And their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment."

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A Conquering Army. v. 14. The armies of heaven doubtless include all who engage in the conflict with the beast and false prophet. "The troops of heaven."-Moffatt. This great warfare is pictured in Eph. 6:10-17 and all Christians are there included in the army of Christ. The army also includes the "called, and chosen and faithful" in Rev. 17:14. The riders of the white horses are clothed in "fine linen, white and clean", and this is the raiment of those who make up the bride of the Lamb. v. 8. The picture is that of a conquering general leading a victorious army. It is the charge of the white brigade. It probably includes the advents of Christ and the defeat of His enemies both before and after the millennium. The saints will help execute the judgment determined for the wicked. See Jude 14,15; Ps.149:5-9. The robe of Christ's righteousness is not only the wedding garment; it is also the uniform and armor of the soldiers of the cross. 2 Cor. 6:7. "Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict."--P.K. 725.

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The Mighty Weapon. v. 15. This is the same sharp two-edged sword mentioned in Rev. 1:16. It is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, which is sharp and quick and powerful. Heb. 4:12. The same weapon that is used to prick the heart and cut sin out of the life, will also slay those who refuse to surrender. "It is written" was the weapon used by Christ to defeat Satan during His earthly visit. "Jesus unsheathed the sword of the Spirit and put to flight the prince of devils." By this same weapon the wicked will be slain at the second advent. See Isa. 11:4; 2 Thes. 2:8.

The Rod of Iron. The symbol is that of Roman supremacy in its complete sovereignty, permanency, solidarity, and uncompromising rulership. The cruel and despotic tyranny of Rome is not included in the symbol. The rule of Christ is that of a shepherd over his sheep. He rules with kindness and love but His authority and sovereignty are absolute because their obedience is perfect. Love is more powerful than tyranny. It is more permanent than force. The illustration is that of the sovereignty of an Oriental shepherd over his flock. "And He will Himself be their Shepherd."--Wey. "And He will shepherd them with an iron flail." --Moffatt. "And He will be sherherding them with an iron club." --Concordant Version. All enemies will be put under His feet and with a shepherd's rod of iron Christ will reign forever. See Isa. 9:6,7; 1 Cor. 15:24,25.

Name on Thigh. v. 16. The thigh is the place where the general carries his sword and thus Christ is pictured in Psalms 45:3-6. The name is written on the vesture that covers the thigh. It is doubtless on the girdle or belt. "Upon His cloak."--Concordant Version. It is the outer garment, the military cloak of the commander. The High Priest carried his title on his vesture and so did ancient kings. While the name written on His vesture was "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS", the wearer of "many crowns" had also many names. At least 247 names are ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures. Names are descriptive of character and it is because His character is so wonderful and unfathomable that so many names are necessary to describe Him. In this chapter He is called the "Faithful and True", "The Word of God", and "a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself." The latter doubtless represents the many aspects of His character that are unknown to us. Eternity will not be long enough to fully know Him.

The Unsurpassed. "Will Jesus ever be surpassed? Nineteen hundred years have passed and His equal has not risen. This is not true of the World's other great ones. Every generation produces geniuses worthy to be compared with those who have gone before. It can be said of no one man, 'He stands alone; he has no rival; no equal; no superior.' But this is true of Jesus. Nineteen hundred years instead of diminishing His greatness has accentuated it. To-day more than ever before the limelight is on the Nazarene."--Los Angeles Times, Editorial.

Supper of the Great God. v. 17,18. Babylon had gathered the evil spirits and the wicked to herself like vultures to a carcass. She was the home of every unclean and hateful spiritual bird. Now literal vultures and birds of prey are summoned to eat her flesh and drink her blood. The announcing angel stands where he can be seen and heard by all, "In the full light of the sun."-Wey. This is the most conspicuous place in the heavens. The angelic herald cries with a loud voice and how vast his audience and how terrible his message. This is the same great banquet of the wicked described in Eze. 39:17-20.

The Two Banquets. This chapter pictures two suppers or banquets. The first is called "the marriage supper of the Lamb", and the second "the supper of the great God." Invitations are issued to each supper. All are invited to the first and those who refuse the invitation must attend the second supper. At the supper of the gread God, or of Babylon, the guests are also the victims. Acceptance of the invitation to the first supper is voluntary; attendance at the second supper is mandatory on all who refuse the first, in another sense the birds of prey are the invited guests, for they alone partake of the feast.

The Invited Guests. v. 19-21. These are doubtless the same kings and nations mentioned in Rev. 16:13; 17:12-14; and Psalms 2:1-5. The beast and false prophet, with the harlot Babylon and her daughters, and the kings with whom they have committed spiritual fornication, are among the distinguished guests at this banquet. They had feasted and reveled in licentious pleasure and wanton luxury, and now they become the viands of the vulture festival. The kings and nations are gathered through the agency of evil angels. Rev. 16:13-16. This includes the gatherings both for the battle of Armageddon, and God and Magog, before and after the millennium. They gather for the purpose of defeating the Son of God and overthrowing His kingdom, but their anticipated victory is turned into a vulture carnival with themselves as the prey.

Beast and False Prophet. v. 20. "And the Wild Beast was captured, and with him the false Prophet."--Wey. The false prophet is here identified as the two-horned beast of chapter 13, which deceived the world by false miracles, and demanded that an image be made to the beast. Catholicism and apostate Protestantism had united in an effort to compel the world to worship the beast and receive the mark of his character, and to oppose God's final warning message and persecute the messengers. Now the tables turn and they receive their just rewards.

The Lake of Fire. It is at the close of the millennium that the beast and false prophet are cast into perdition or the lake of fire, Rev. 17:8; 20:9,10,15. The statement that they are "cast alive" into the fire indicates that they continue to the end as Satan's last agents in deceiving and ruling the world. It also indicates that the same systems will exist again after the millennium. Daniel predicted the same fate for the beast with ten horns ruled by the papacy. Dan. 7:11. All descriptions of the day of God's wrath and indignation include His judgments before and after the millennium. The great Satanic powers that have led millions captive and burned them at the stake, are now led captive and burned with fire.

Remnant Slain with Sword. v. 21. At the second advent the wicked are slain by the brightness of Christ's coming. It here indicates that the same weapon will be used again in the final destruction. See Jer. 25:33. Our text seems to picture a class scattered over the earth who do not join in attacking the holy city and who are not directly connected with the beast and false prophet. They have not taken part in active warfare against God and His people as have the professed Christian powers and are therefore not held as responsible. They do not die in the lake of fire but by the sword of His mouth.

Memory Text: Rev. 19:8.

IMPRISONMENT OF SATAN

62

Satan Captured. Rev. 20:1-3. "And he seized the devil."--E.D. Chapters 17 and 18 pictured the judgments of God upon Babylon; chapter 19 describes the capture and imprisonment of the beast and false prophet; and here it is revealed that Satan himself, "the prince of this world", is to be captured, imprisoned, and punished. Satan has been the controlling spirit of Babylon, the beast, and false prophet. They were his agents in making war on God and His church. Four names are applied to the great rebel to describe his evil character. He is the "dragon" in his relation to earthly powers through which he ruled the world; he is "that old serpent" because of his subtlety and power to deceive and beguile the human race; he is "the Devil" as a malignant slanderer and liar, and the father of lies; and he is "Satan", the adversary and accuser.

The Angel. The mighty angel who descends from heaven and arrests and imprisons Satan, is doubtless Michael, the Archangel. See 1 Thes. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:22-28. It was Christ who defeated Lucifer in the first battle around the throne in heaven; as Emmanuel, the "man child", he defeated him again on earth during His first advent. It was Michael, the Archangel, who volunteered to redeem man and restore his dominion to the sovereighty of Jehovah. Through His death was made possible the destruction of the author of death. Heb. 2:14. He who began the task of wresting the earth from the great rebel, and man from his power, will complete the work and not delegate it to a created being. He cannot deliver up the kingdom of this world to the Father, and put down all opposing rule, authority, and power, till Satan's career is brought to an end and the great rebel punished. It is Christ who entered "the strong man's house" to "bind the strong man", that He might "spoil his house" and "his goods." See Matt. 12:25-29. Satan is declared to be the "strong man".

The Millennium. This thousand year period is known as the millennium. The word millennium is derived from two Latin words, "Mille", meaning "a thousand", and "annus", meaning "years". Any period of a thousand years is a millennium, just as ten years is a "decade", and a hundred years is a "century". There have already been about ~~six~~ millenniums of the reign of sin, but the term is applied especially to the seventh thousand-year period during the time Satan is bound. For 6000 years the arch-rebel and criminal has been at liberty destroying the peace and harmony of the universe. His arrent and imprisonment take place in this world where he has done most of his mischief. This is in accordance with the rules of justice regarding all criminals.

Satan Bound. As the result of Satan's binding he can "deceive the nations no more" for a thousand years. There are some who teach that this was fulfilled in the past and that we are already in the millennium. If what has happened in recent years is a sample of this blissful period we should pray fervently to be delivered from what remains. For six millenniums Satan and his angels have been busy night and day causing sin, sickness, strife, warfare, and death. As a roaring lion Satan has gone about seeking whom he may devour. His reign has filled the earth with sorrow and ruin. When his work is brought to a standstill and he is imprisoned, surely the world will know of the event.

A Great Chain. The millennium will be ushered in by a series of events of the greatest magnitude. These will constitute a chain of circumstances which bind the great rebel so that his deceptive work ceases for a thousand years. The use of a chain in this symbolic sense is very familiar. In Jude 6 the evil angels are said to be "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Yet these angels are not bound with literal chains, but nevertheless they cannot escape the judgment. A prisoner looking at the iron bars that shut him in said: "These are not real; they are not the things that hold me here. My being here to-day is the result of a long chain of events which I alone have forged." If it had not been for that chain of events the gates would have opened to him or would never have shut him in. We speak of business being being "tied up" because of a chain of events or circumstances. This is the kind of chain that binds Satan.

The First Event. The first link in the chain of events that ends Satan's deceiving career for 1000 years is the coming of the angel from heaven which represents the second coming of Christ. While Satan's work is restricted till the close of probation he is at no time bound. Between the close of probation and the second coming of Christ he has his greatest freedom in the rulership of the world. With no divine restraint he makes the final demonstration that satisfies the universe that as a ruler he is an utter failure. The demonstration ends with the coming of Christ who alone has the right and power to arrest, chain, imprison, and destroy the great arch-rebel. This right and power was the result of His Calvary victory. It was through His incarnation and death that Christ made possible the final end of death and its author.

Resurrection of Righteousness. The second event in the chain that binds Satan is the resurrection of the righteous dead which takes place at the second coming of Christ. See 1 Cor. 15:21-23; 1 Thes. 4:16-18. The Scriptures teach that there will be two resurrections, "both of the just and unjust". Acts 24:15; John 5:28,29. "The dead in Christ rise first", or come up in the first resurrection at the coming of Christ. This is called "the first resurrection", and the "rest of the dead", or the wicked, are not raised till a thousand years later at the close of the millennium. See Rev. 20:4-6

Translation of Righteousness. The third event is the removal of the living and resurrected saints from the earth for 1000 years. At the second advent Christ does not touch this earth but remains in the heavens above the earth while His angel reapers gather the elect who are "caught up to meet the Lord in the air." See Psalms 50:3-5; John 13:36-14:3; Matt. 24:30,31; 1 Thes. 4:16-18. This removal of the righteous from the earth places them beyond the reach of Satan and his temptations.

The teaching that there will be a secret translation or "rapture" has no foundation in the Scriptures. The second advent is the reunion time and then and not before will the righteous be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air."

Destruction of Wicked. The fourth link in the chain that ends Satan's deceiving career for a millennium is the destruction of all the wicked. This is accomplished by the sword of Christ's mouth, or the glory and brightness of His coming. Isa. 11:4; 2 Thes. 1:7-9; 2:8; Luke 17:26-30. The momentary flash of divinity through humanity in the Garden of Gethsemene caused the mob to fall backward to the ground. The approach of one angel to the tomb of Joseph caused the Roman guard to fall as dead men. When Christ returns in all His glory and with the glory of the Father and all the holy angels, the wicked cannot look upon the scene and live. They call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face and glory of the Lamb. The dazzling glory consumes them.

Desolation of Earth. The firth event is the desolation of the earth which is the result of the coming of Christ and the plagues and judgments. Isa. 13:6,9-13; Jer. 4:23-28. The word "void" means "empty, vacant, without inhabitant". "Desolate and empty."-Swedish. It is the great earthquake and hailstones in connection with Christ's coming that destroys the proud cities of earth and leaves the land desolate and empty. Rev. 16:17-21. The promise is that the Lord will "not make a full end". His purpose will be carried out and the earth inhabited, but not during the millennium. See also Zeph. 1:2,3; 3:6.

The Bottomless Pit. v. 3. "The abyss."--R.V. The word abyss means "a bottomless gulf, a mass of waters, a pit." The same word is used in the Septuagint for "deep" in Gen. 1:2. The earth in its original state was desolate and without inhabitants and was the "abyss" or "bottomless pit". In Rev. 9:1-3 the desolate wastes of Arabia is called the abyss or bottomless pit. During the millennium the earth will again be brought back to a chaotic condition which will be the prison house of Satan for a thousand years. The world cursed by his cruel reign and over which he had so long held dominion as its prince, god, and ruler, now becomes his prison house. With the wicked all dead and the righteous in heaven out of his reach, Satan will be confined to the earth where he will "deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years are fulfilled."

No Man's Land. The earth will be a dreary and lonesome place in which Satan and his angels must spend their long vacation. "There is no man" and "none inhabitant". The "cities are destroyed" and the streets lie waste and "none passeth by". The earth is covered with the skeletons of the wicked which are scattered over the earth, "neither gathered nor buried", Jer. 25:33. The city of Dupont, Tennessee, had a population of 40,000 when the Armistice was signed. The powder plant immediately shut down and all the people moved away. The stillness and lonesomeness of a vacant city is almost unbearable.

There Will Be Peace. Many are looking forward to the millennium as the time when wars will cease and peace will reign. There will be peace but it will be the peace of the cemetery. In some places the cemetery is called "the acre of peace". The earth during the millennium will be one vast cemetery containing all the wicked who have ever lives. "There is no peace saith my God to the wicked", but with the wicked all dead, the silence and peace of death will prevail. During this time the earth will be removed out of its orbit and will wander through space like a drunken man. Isa. 13:13; 24:19,20.

Confined to Earth. Up until the millennium Satan and his angels can go almost anywhere they will throughout the universe. When Christ comes he is "shut up" in the earth which becomes his prison for a thousand years. With the "key of the bottomless pit" Satan is locked up in his prison so that he cannot leave it. The angel sets "a seal upon him", or upon the door of the prison so that he cannot escape. This seal represents the power and authority of the heavenly kingdom which effectually secures the great rebel until the judgment passes sentence. "Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Limited to the earth, he will not have access to other worlds, to tempt and annoy those who have never fallen. It is in this sense that he is bound; there are none remaining, upon whom he can exercise his power. He is wholly cut off from his work of deception and ruin which for so many centuries has been his sole delight."--G.C. 659.

The General Judgment. The general judgment of the wicked and of Satan and his angels takes place during the millennium. Verse 4. "Who were allowed to judge."--Moffatt. "Authority was given them to act as judges."--20th C.N.T. "They were constituted judges."--Dean Alford. It is during this time that the saints "judge the world, and judge angels". 1 Cor. 6:2,3. The wicked will be judged by a jury of their fellow men who know what sin is and can render just decisions. It is during this time that the wicked are judged so that they can be rewarded "according to their works." Rev. 22:12. The righteous will also help execute the judgments. Psalms 149:7-9.

The Tables Turn. In this great tribunal Paul will be the judge and Felix, Festus, Agrippa, and Nero, will have to accept a just sentence at his hands and from others whom they judged. Jesus will then be the Judge, and Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod, will receive sentence "according to their works". Satan and his angels must then receive sentence from those whom they had so long tempted and persecuted. Those especially who live through the closing crisis will be qualified to judge, especially the 144,000. This whole picture is summed up in Isa. 24:1,3-5, 19-23. Margin. "Found wanting", or, "suffer their punishment".--Swedish. The judgment takes place in the New Jerusalem while darkness covers the earth where Satan and his angels are in the "pit" or "dungeon", awaiting sentence.

Memory Text: Rev. 20:6.

THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG

63

5/15

Satan Loosed. Rev. 20:3,7. "Set at liberty a short time."--Wey. Just as surely as Satan is imprisoned for a thousand years, he is released again at the close of that period and again deceives the nations. Any theory of the millennium that does not teach that he is set at liberty for a short time after being bound is untrue because unscriptural. Most millennial doctrines are too theoretical and beautiful to admit of Satan's being released again after being bound. "After many days" Satan and his angels are "visited" and set at liberty "for a little season", before their execution. They have been judged by the righteous and "found wanting". See Isa. 24:1-5, 19-23. The "little season" may be 100 years but is probably much less time.

Character Unchanged. v. 8,9. Satan's long and lonesome vacation makes no change in his character. He does not forget his cunning and deceptive arts. He is still controlled by the same rebellious spirit that actuated him before the millennium. He is the same war-lord who marshalled the nations to Armageddon. He is given an opportunity to demonstrate to the universe that the long period of idle reflection on his past career has brought no change or repentance. Satan was bound by a series or chain of events and another chain of events releases him to his work of deception again.

Christ Returns. At the close of the millennium Christ returns again which might be called the third advent. The redeemed who have assisted Him in the work of judgment during the 1000 years return with Him to help execute the sentences decided upon. Jude 14,15; Psalms 149:7-9. This time Christ comes all the way to the earth and His feet first touch the very spot from whence He ascended after His first advent. Zech. 14:4,5. As His feet touch the Mount of Olives it spreads out into a great plain or level highlands to which the New Jerusalem descends. Rev. 21:2,10. The celestial city will be located where the old Jerusalem now stands.

Sacred Spot. No spot on earth could be more sacred than Jerusalem which was so long the headquarters of the church militant; the capital of God's only earthly kingdom. The Garden of Eden was located in that vicinity and was the original center and capital of Adam's dominion. There Abraham had his test of faith on Mount Moriah; there Jacob had his dream of the ladder connecting heaven and earth; there Solomon's temple was built; there David's throne was located, which was also called "the throne of the Lord". There also Christ was born; and there He struggled and died and was buried and resurrected. From that sacred spot He ascended and to it He will descend with the celestial city which will be the capital of the restored kingdom of Adam throughout all eternity. The original plan will be carried out and the redeemed will gather there from all the earth each Sabbath to worship and each month to eat of the fruit of the tree of life. Isa. 66:22,23. Satan has been able to delay but he cannot disannul God's eternal purpose.

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Resurrection of Wicked. v. 5. The third event in the series at the end of the millennium is the resurrection of the wicked. This is the chief event that unbinds Satan so that he can deceive again. The statement in verse five referring to the second resurrection is placed in parenthesis in the Twentieth Century New Testament. As Christ descends He calls the wicked from their graves, numberless as the sands of the sea. It is estimated that more than 140,000,000,000 people have lived on the earth and the majority will be numbered among the wicked lost. As they come to life their thoughts resume the same current that ruled them before they died. Millions of them dies on the fields of battle, thirsting for the blood of their fellow-men. They will arise to life with the same fighting instinct. Satan finds in them a ready response to his plans to capture the celestial city which will be the only obstacle to his ambition for world dominion.

Gog and Magog. Magog was one of the descendants of Japheth, the son of Noah, who was the ancestor of the northern nations. "Gog bears the earmarks of Russia. The names of her provinces are suggestive. It is generally agreed that the name and titles of the northern king should be rendered 'Gog of the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal' (Eze. 38:2 R.V.), and are conceded by Russian etymologists to be roots of derivations of Russia, Tobolsk, and Muscovy."--"The Vision of Patmos", Davis, p. 284. Some believe that in this text Gog represents Satan, the prince of the world, and Magog, the land of Gog or this earth.

The Great War Lord. Satan has been the great war lord who has marshalled the nations of earth to all the bloody wars of human history. He is the moving spirit that gathers the nations to Armageddon and will be the commander in chief of the armies in the battle of Gog and Magog. In the great army gathered around the New Jerusalem will be the greatest generals and warriors of all history: Alexander, Xerxes, Caesar, Pompey, Hanibal, and Napoleon. It is the same gathering of the nations mentioned in Rev. 17:12-14; 19:19,20. It is the war that ends all war over the supremacy of this world.

The Great White Throne. v. 11-13. When the wicked hosts are ready to make the attack they are suddenly paralized by a scene of indescribable glory. "Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray....Above the throne is revealed the cross; and like a panoramic view appear the scenes of Adam's temptation and fall, and the successive steps in the great plan of redemption....The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God, on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. They have none to plead their cause; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them....The wicked see what they have forfrited by their life of rebellion."--G.C. 665-668.

Coronation of Christ. "As if entranced, the wicked have looked upon the coronation of the Son of God. They see in His hands the tables of the divine law, the statutes which they have despised and transgressed. They witness the outburst of wonder, rapture, and adoration from the saved....Satan seems paralized as he beholds the glory and majesty of Christ. He who was once a covering cherub remembers whence he has fallen. A shining seraph, 'son of the morning;' how changed, how degraded! From the council where once he was honored, he is forever excluded. He sees another now standing near to the Father, veiling His glory. He has seen the crown placed upon the head of Christ by an angel of lofty stature and majestic presence, and he knows that the exalted position of this angel might have been his."--Id. 668,669.

Confession of Guilt. Before their execution the wicked acknowledge that the sentence is just. It is at this time that "every knee" shall bow, and "every tongue" confess that Christ is Lord. Even Satan himself confesses to the justice of God's dealings with him. "And now Satan bows down, and confesses the justice of his sentence."--Id. 670. Then there takes place a scene of indescribable anguish and confusion. In their rage and disappointment the wicked turn upon their deceivers with hateful vengeance in fulfillment of Rev. 17:16. It is at this time also that the following Scriptures will be fulfilled: Luke 13:28; Isa. 13:7,8; Zech. 14:12,13. The anguish is caused by the knowledge of their loss through the rejection of Christ. They weep and wail because "they themselves are thrust out" of the city and kingdom of God; because they have lost eternal life.

Doom of Rebels. v. 9,10. "Consumed them."--Wey. The fire that descends from heaven envelops the whole earth, turning it into a vast lake of fire. This fire not only destroys the wicked but also renovates the earth of all traces of the curse of sin. 2 Peter 3:7-11. Into this lake of fire will be cast or confined for punishment, Satan, the beast, the false prophet, and all the wicked whose names were not found in the book of life. See verses 14,15. With the destruction of the wicked, "death and hell", or hades, also come to their end nevermore to curse the universe. "The last enemy to be destroyed is death."--1 Cor. 15:26. As the sentence is executed the redeemed and the loyal universe shout an approving "Amen; Alleluia".

Justice of Punishment. The absolute justice of the reward of the wicked is proven by the following facts: (1) The justice of God's dealings with sin and sinners is testified to by the Lord, the loyal angels, the redeemed, and finally by the wicked, including Satan and his angels. (2) The sentence is rendered and executed "according to their works", v. 12,13. "They were judged one by one according to their actions."--20th C.N.T. See Rom. 2:5,6; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12. This is absolutely essential to justice in an earthly court. Because there are degrees of guilt there must be degrees of punishment. The seriousness of a crime can always be judged by the punishment administered. A petty crime is punished with a light sentence and a major crime with a heavy sentence. The death sentence for sin indicates its awful nature.

Accurate Records. (3) The third fact insuring justice is that the sentence is based on written records. Angel book-keepers make a faithful record of every secret sin and even every idle word. These will all be brought to light in the judgment making it possible to punish according to the works. See Eccl. 12:13,14; Matt. 12:36,37. Daniel was given a vision of the great judgment with the Judge and jury witnesses, and he said, "The judgment was set and the books were open". Dan. 7:9,10. "Rabbi Jehuda said, all the actions of men, whether good or bad, are written in a book; and of all they shall give an account."--Sohar, Gen. fol. 79, col. 298. When the saints judge the world and judge angels they will have the written records, making mistakes impossible. All whose sins are not pardoned and covered with the imputed righteousness of Christ must meet the death penalty.

Judged Before Punished. (4) Justice demands that there shall be no punishment till after judgment. To punish a person without a fair trial is mob rule and is contrary to the most fundamental principles of civilization. The wicked do not receive their punishment till after the millennium when the tribunal that decides their cases is in session. See Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4,9. (5) Another fundamental rule of justice is that criminals shall receive their punishment in the place where they commit their crimes. The wicked have committed their sins on this earth and on this earth they receive their rewards. See Rev. 20:9; Isa. 24:21; Prov. 11;31. (6) Justice also demands that the punishment be public and not secret. The righteous will witness the fate of the wicked. Ps. 37:34; 91:8.

Sentence of Death. (7) Capital punishment or death is God's penalty for sin. This extreme penalty indicates the awful nature of sin. "the soul that sinneth it shall die", is the decree of Jehovah. Eze. 18:20; Rom. 6;23; Rev. 20:14. There are two deaths, the first being temporary because of the resurrection. This death is called "sleep" all through the Scriptures because there is to be an awakening. The second death is eternal and from it there is no resurrection. The rewards of the righteous and the wicked are just the opposite, one eternal life, and the other eternal death. Union with God is life; separation from God is death. 1 John 5:11,12.

A Clean Universe. (8). The wicked will be "devoured", or "consumed". They suffer death which means, "cessation of life, total extinction." It cannot be life or existance even in a lake of fire. See 2 Thes. 1:7-9; Psalms 37;9,10,20; Obadiah 15,16; Mal. 4:1,2. Even Satan is to be brought to ashes and trampled upon by the redeemed. Eze. 28;18,19. There is to be a "perpetual end" of sin and sinners. Ps. 9:6; Nah. 1:9,10; Rev. 5:13. The fearful lesson will have been forever learned and sin will never enter the universe again. With the nail-prints in the hands of Christ and the song of the Lamb as constant reminders of the cost of redemption, the experiment of sin will never be repeated. God's original and eternal purpose will be carried out "as if man had never fallen."

Memory Text: Rev. 20:14,15.

THE CELESTIAL CITY

64

Renewed Paradise. Rev. 21:1. The Bible begins and ends with a vision of Paradise. The first twochapters picture the paradise that was lost through the disobedience of the first Adam, and the last two, the paradise restored through the obedience of the second Adam. Without these two pictures the Biblical canon would be incomplete. The book of Genesis tells the story of the genesis or beginning of things, but the record would be imperfect without the apocalyptic vision of the end. The Bible covers the entire history of the reign of sin and shows that the recovery will be complete; that all that was lost will be restored.

The closing Scene. The Revelation is the book of contrasts. What a happy contrast is this beautiful picture to the terrible scenes which precede it. The previous chapter describes the awful doom of Satan and his followers in the lake of fire, where they suffer the second and eternal death. Now the curtain is lifted on the most sublime and glorious scene in the apocalyptic drama. Many dramas have a tragic ending but this one ends in triumph. The closing scene is the best of the series. After witnessing the struggles of the church militant with the powers of darkness, how cheering is the view of her triumphant state.

The Holy City. v. 2,3. The New Jerusalem descends to the earth at the close of the millennium and before the earth is renewed to its Edenic beauty. It is the first of heaven to come to earth and therefore we will give it our first consideration. As Noah's ark safely rode the waters of the mighty flood, so the holy city will protect the righteous when the earth becomes a vast lake of fire. Then will God's people "dwell with devouring fire" and "everlasting burnings". Isa. 33:14,15. As soon as the earth is renovated and renewed, the celestial city becomes the capital of the restored kingdom of this world.

A Literal City. To teach that the New Jerusalem is only a symbol of the church is to make meaningless and even absurd a large part of the apocalyptic description of it. It is just as literal as the "new heavens" and "new earth" and the "sea" mentioned in verse one. The skepticism of the modern church regarding things literal and material in the spiritual realm, while at the same time revelling in the grossest earthliness and materialism, is one of the strangest of parodoxes. Many of the most practical persons in this life become the most ethereal in their ideas of the heavenly kingdom. Everything becomes so unreal that they have no strong desire to go there. That the New Jerusalem is a literal city is evident from the fact that it has been prepared for the church, and cannot therefore be the church itself. John 14:1-3; Heb. 11:10-16; 13:14.

Home of Bride. v. 9,10. Just as old Babylon was the home of Satan's church or bride and for this reason goes by the name of the city, so the church or wife of Christ is called by the name of the city that is her eternal home. In Gal. 4:26 "the Jerusalem which is above" is called "the mother of us all". In Rev. 22:14, the obedient church of Christ is promised a triumphant entrance into the city. "The heavenly city is Christ's Bride, not on account of what makes it a city, but on account of the sanctified and glorified ones who inhabit it. Without the saints, whose home and residence it is, it would not be the Lamb's wife....Mere edifices and avenues do not make a city; neither does a mere congregation or multitude of people make a city. You cannot have a living city without people to inhabit it; and you cannot have a city without the edifices and avenues arranged in some fixed shape for the accommodation of those who make up its population. It is the two together...which constitute a city. And whilst this holy Jerusalem is the Bride and Wife of Christ with reference to its holy occupants, it is still those occupants as disposed and arranged in that city, So that the city, as a city, as well as its people as a people, even the whole taken together, is embraced in what the angel calls 'the Bride, the Lamb's Wife,' as she finally appears in her eternal form and completeness."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, pp. 402, 403.

City's Illumination. v. 11. "It shone with a radiance like that of a very precious stone such as a jasper bright and transparent." --Wey. The Oriental jasper is of a beautiful sea-green color and the finest quality is very clear like the diamond or rock-crystal. Green is the predominating color in nature. It is the most agreeable color to the eyes to which they are best adapted. Other colors often fatigue and sometimes injure the eye-sight. The lighting system of the New Jerusalem is not that of the bright, glaring, white light of our cities, but a soft, mellow-green light, which will harmonize with the peaceful spirit of the city and its inhabitants.

The Twelve Gates. v. 12,13,21. "It had a wall, massive and high, with twelve large gates, and in charge of the gates were twelve angels, And overhead, above the gates, names were inscribed which are those of the twelve tribes of the descendants of Israel." --Wey. The redeemed will be divided into twelve nations and will be ruled over by the twelve apostle-kings. Matt. 19:27,28. The citizens of each nation will pass through the gate of the nation to which they belong. "In the palace of the world to come there are twelve gates, each of which is inscribed with one of the twelve tribes; he, therefore, who is of one tribe is received into none of the twelve gates but his own; and so of the rest."--Synopsis Sohar, p. 115. An angel gate-keeper is stationed at each of the twelve gates.

Twelve Divisions. The city is doubtless divided into twelve divisions, otherwise there would be no significance to the twelve nations passing through the twelve separate gates. Each tribe or nation must have allotted to it a section of the city adjacent to its gate of entrance. The three gates on each side will doubtless be in the order in which the tribes camped around the tabernacle as given in Num. 2, and Eze. 48. On the East were Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. On the South were Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. On the West were Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, And on the North were Dan, Asher, and Naphtali.

Size of City. v. 15-17. A furlong is about one eighth of a mile. This would make the city 1500 miles in circumference. "1500 miles."--Moffatt. "1200 miles long."--Wey. The circumference is doubtless meant as it was the ancient custom to measure cities by the distance around the walls. According to Diodorus Siculus, Nineveh was 400 stadia in circumference, and Herodotus said Babylon was 120 stadia on each side or 480 in circumference. The stadia and furlong were practically the same. The wall of Babylon was 50 royal cubits high or between 75 and 100 feet. The walls of the New Jerusalem are said to be 144 cubits high. The cubit was the distance from the elbow to the end of the middle finger which averaged about 18 inches. That of the angel would doubtless be longer. The height of the wall was therefore about 250 feet. "288 feet."--20th C.N.T. The height of the wall would prove that the word "equal" as applied to the length and breadth and height of the city, has the meaning of uniform, symetrical, or in proportion.

Construction of City. v. 18. "The solid fabric of the wall was jasper."--Wey. The Oriental jasper is very hard and almost indestructable. Jasper pillars have been preserved for thousands of years with but little evidence of erosion. Although we are not told, this jasper is doubtless also transparent so that the walls do not hide the glory of the city. The city itself is constructed principally of a gold far more pure than the famed gold of Ophir. It is so pure that it is like "clear glass". In verse 21 we are told that the streets are paved with this gold. Transparent gold would make a poor paving material unless there was something beautiful to be seen beneath the pavement.

Twelve Foundations. v. 14,19,20. According to Heb. 11:10, the foundations were beneath the entire city. On each foundation is engraved the name of the apostle-king ruling over the nation to whom belongs that portion of the city. The crystal clearness of the golden streets makes it possible for the inhabitants of the city to see the precious stone foundations of the city and the names of the apostles written on them. The twelve colors of the foundation probably represent the characteristics of the twelve nations and their rulers. These twelve stones are almost the same as those on the breastplate of the high priest which represented the twelve tribes of Israel. Ex. 28:17. This is further proof that the stones represent character.

The Twelve Stones. (1) Jasper: a sea-green and may be the modern diamond. (2) Sapphire: a clear azure blue and very precious. (3) Chalcedony: a green carbonate of copper found in the mines of Chalcedon. (4) Emerald: a bright green. (5) Sardonyx or onyx: a dark horny color of the agate variety resembling fingernails in color. (6) Sardius: a blood-red color. The stone was first found in Sardis. (7) Chrysolyte: a dusky green with a cast of yellow and known as the "gold stone". (8) Beryl: a variety of emerald of a blueish-green color. (9) Topaz: a pale dead-green with a mixture of yellow. (10) Chrysoprasus: a golden leek-green or yellowish pale green hue. (11) Jacinth: a reddish-brown with a mixture of yellow. (12) Amethyst: a purple or violet color composed of strong blue and deep red.

The Temple. v. 22. Temples have been erected as places of worship during man's alienation from God. Before man fell he worshipped God direct and he had no need to build a temple. God was his temple and with Him he talked face to face. While Jesus was among the disciples they needed no temples or synagogues. Jesus was their temple or place of worship. The redeemed will see and worship the Father and Son face to face in the celestial city and no other temple for worship will be needed. There will be a temple on Mount Zion which will contain the throne and throne room, but it will be a temple dedicated to rulership rather than worship.

No Night There. v. 23,25. While the light of the sun and moon will not be needed in the city because of the glory of God which constantly illuminates it, there is no evidence that the sun and moon will cease to function as light-bearers. The world in general outside the city will still need their light. God's original plan will be carried out when He ordained the sun "to rule the day" and the moon "to rule the night". Gen. 1:16. In the city "there will be no night" because it is the dwelling place of the Light of the world, but there will be day and night throughout the earth. "While the earth remaineth...day and night shall not cease."--Gen. 8:22. See also Isa. 30:26.

Nations of Saved. v. 24,26. How many nations and how many kings? The redeemed will be divided into twelve nations with the twelve apostles ruling as kings over them. Through the gates assigned to them the redeemed nations and their kings will pass in and out of the Royal City. Doubtless the earth will be divided into twelve divisions as was the Canaan land between the twelve tribes who came out of Egypt. Then will be fulfilled Isa. 26:1,2. "Nations" should be used here in the plural as well as "gates". There will be twelve nations who will enter through twelve gates. Of course the twelve will together compose a central or united kingdom or nation.

The Excluded. v. 27; 22:14,15. Only the obedient are permitted to enter the city; those who "stand recorded in the Lamb's book of life."--Wey. The book is the Lamb's; it belongs to Christ, the Pastor of the flock, and contains the membership roll of the church triumphant. The character of those who enter the city is also indicated by the character of those excluded. Three times it is repeated that all liars are excluded from the heavenly city and kingdom. Lying is the prevailing sin of this generation. "The social atmosphere of our world teems with lies as with microbes. Lies in parliaments, in markets, in churches. The whole world teems with imposters."--Rev. Thomas in "Pulpit Commentary."

God Hates Lying. Prov. 6:16-19. Lying was the sin that caused the fall of Satan, his angels, and man. Those who enter the kingdom will get the victory over lying. Zeph. 3:13; Rev. 14:5. "And no lie has ever been found upon their lips; they are faultless."-Wey. Especially will the last generation be an age of liars, false accusers, and scandal-mongers; an age of novel writers and readers who "loveth and maketh a lie". "Falsities and treacheries confront us unblushingly at every point. People not only make falsehoods, speak falsehoods, print falsehoods, and believe falsehoods; but they eat them, and drink them, and wear them, and act them, and live them, and make them one of the great elements of their being. One-half, at least, of all that the eye can see, or the ear hear, or the hands touch, or the tongue taste, is bogus, counterfeit, pinchbeck, shoddy, or some hash or other of untruth. A man cannot move, or open his eyes, without encountering falsehood and lies. In business, in politics, in social life, in professions, and even in what passes for religion, such untruthfulness reigns, that he who would be true scarcely knows any more whom to trust, what to believe, how to move, or by what means to keep his footing, amid the ever increasing flood of unreality and deception."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, pp. 285, 286.

Sixth Century Sermon. "A Christian that shall lie in anything is not a Christian. Faith without works is barren. Thou hast received baptism and clothed thee with Christ; if therefore thou strip thyself with Him through thy evil deeds then hast thou made thyself barren."--From Sermon MS in Coptic of sixth century by Gregory Nazianzen.

Memory Text: Rev. 21:27.

THE KINGDOM OF GLORY

65

Eden Restored. Rev. 21:1. In its primitive glory the earth was called Eden, which means, "a delightful region". "As the earth came forth from the hand of its Maker, it was exceedingly beautiful. Its surface was diversified with mountains, hills, and plains, interspersed with noble rivers and lovely lakes.... Graceful shrubs and delicate flowers greeted the eye at every turn. The heights were crowned with trees more majestic than any that now exist. The air, untainted by foul miasm, was clear and beautiful. The entire landscape outvied in beauty the decorated grounds of the proudest palace."--P.P. 44. All of this is to be restored to its former state and glory.

Dominion of Adam. The earth in its Edenic glory was given to man as a dominion or kingdom. Adam was the prince or ruler of the world but he surrendered the dominion to Satan who has claimed it ever since. Luke 4:5-7. Michael as the second Adam came to redeem and restore man and the lost kingdom. Luke 19:10; Micah 4:8. The purpose of Christ is to restore the redeemed kingdom to Adam and his family. Dan. 7:22,27; Matt. 25:31,34. The hope of the restored Eden and kingdom has inspired God's people since man was driven from Paradise because of disobedience. The sons and daughters of Adam who have accepted the plan of salvation have always looked forward to the restoration of the kingdom of glory. Isa. 65:17-25; 2 Peter 3:13,14.

A Re-Creation. v. 5. "I am recreating all things."--Wey. It is not a new earth but a renewed earth. A "new" earth does not necessarily mean another earth. It is new in the same sense that a redeemed man is called a new creature. It is new in the sense of being renewed or recreated. Because only the surface of the earth has been marred by sin we are told that God will "renew the face of the earth". Psalms 104:29,30. A complete restoration of all that was lost through sin is promised. Acts 3:20,21. The word "restitution" means: "The act of replacing or restoring that which is lost or has been taken away. The recovery of a former state." When the restoration is complete the earth will again be "like Eden" and "her desert like the garden of the Lord", or Paradise, which means, "the garden of all delights." Isa. 51:3.

The Capital City. Rev. 21:2,3; 22:1-3. These verses indicate that the New Jerusalem will not only be the capital of the renewed earthly kingdom but of the universe. The throne of "God and of the Lamb", indicates the Father and the Son will both have their thrones here. The earth which has been the great battlefield of the war of the ages, will be exalted to become the headquarters of the government that rules the universe. The overthrow of Satan's kingdom will be complete and the very battlefield becomes the habitation of the victors and the headquarters of the kingdom of glory. It is appropriate that this world of destiny, which has been so long the center of the struggle that decides the rulership of the universe, should become exalted to the highest place among the worlds which compose the provinces of the universal kingdom.

The Joy of the Earth. Psalms 48:1-3. "It is a new city,..one which never appeared before, one of which all other cities are but the poor preimitations, and one as compared with which all present cities will sink out of mind and memory. It is new in its materials in its size, in its location, in its style, in its permanence, in its moral purity, and in everything characteristic of it. It is heaven-built; jeweled in its foundations, walls and streets; perfected in everything that is charming and beautiful, 'as a bride adorned for her husband'; lighting the nations with its brilliancy, itself ever luminous with the glory of God and the Lamb; the true 'Eternal City';--the imperishable palace of the immortal kings of the ages."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 384. No wonder Payson exclaimed as he studied these scenes of beauty: "Lord with-hold thy hand, and show us no more, or we shall be overpowered by the splendor of the vision."

No More Sea. "The sea is no more."--R.V. This must refer to the sea as we know it today. The seas now cover three-fourths of the earth's surface and are made dangerous by fierce storms. Before the flood it is estimated that water covered but one fourth of the surface of the earth. To keep the peoples from congregating the continents were separated by large bodies of water. This will all be changed in the restoration. Just as the "first heaven and the first earth" pass away and give place to "a new heaven and a new earth", so the first sea passes away to be replaced by new bodies of water like those that beautified the earth in the beginning. John was confined to the Isle of Patmos and cut off by the sea from his home and the churches of his pastorate. A legend tells us that he daily climbed the hills of his island prison and wistfully looked across the sea toward his beloved Ephesus and also toward Palestine, his homeland.

Things Eliminated. It is impossible for human beings accustomed to the environments made by sin, to comprehend the glories of the restored kingdom. There are no means of comparison because we have never seen or experienced them. 1 Cor. 2:9. For this reason the enumeration of the things that annoy us here and that will not be there makes a greater appeal to us than an attempted description of things beyond our comprehension. Even this world would seem a paradise if all evil were eliminated and the things that trouble us were removed.

No More Tears. v. 4. This is the favorite Scripture of the sick and suffering. It has been called the hospital text. Christian doctors and ministers use it to console the sick and dying; and to comford the bereaved. Tears are the evidence of sorrow and pain. All who taste of sin known what it means to shed tears. For 6,000 years this earth has been the "vale of tears". The promise to Israel is indeed precious: "The days of thy mourning shall be ended."--Isa. 60:20. The most effectual way to wipe away tears is to remove the cause. It is this way that God wipes away "all tears"; He removes every cause of weeping. There is no promise that all tears will be removed till after the wicked are destroyed in the lake of fire and the earth renewed. Tears will doubtless be shed by the righteous during the millennium as they judge the wicked. See Isa. 65:17-19.

Many Kinds of Tears. There are tears of grief; of sympathy; of disappointment; of physical pain; of mental anguish; of sorrow over sin and its results. Tears dried by human hands are only temporarily removed as the cause cannot be permanently taken away. Jesus became "the Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief", so that our tears might be forever wiped away. Tears are the accompaniment of sorrow and crying which also will be no more. Heartaches and griefs of many varieties beset and torment the human family. Everywhere there are cries of distress because of blasted hopes, because of suffering and death. But the voices of woe and lamentation will be silenced forever in the renewed world.

No More Pain. This cannot be said till after the earth is restored. The greatest physical pain and mental anguish will be experienced by the wicked when they realize they are forever lost and as they suffer the eternal death in the lake of fire. Pain is the common lot of humanity and none can escape. To deny the existance and reality of pain is to close the eyes to the reality of one of the fixe senses. Physical and mental pain can be removed only by taking away the causes. The cause of pain will be removed when sin is no more and sinners are brought to ashes in the lake of fire. This text cannot be true if the doctrine of eternal torment is true for then there would be more pain than ever before.

No more Death. It is estimated that more than 140,000,000,000 of people have lived on the earth and all but a few have died and returned to dust. Every day 200,000 human beings die and every year a nation of 60,000,000 enter the prison house of death. Xerxes wept at the thought that in one hundred years his vast army would all be in their graves. "Death cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people."--Hab. 2:5.

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside howsoe'er defended,
But hath one vacant chair."

Christ's victory over death made possible the destruction of the author of death and of death itself. Heb. 2:14; 1 Cor. 15:26.

No More Sinners. v. 7,8; 22:15. "The people also shall be all righteous."--Isa. 60:21. There will be no undesirable neighbors or citizens in the new earth. Those who kill happiness and make life disagreeable will not be there. The "fearful" will not be there. "The cowards"--Wey. There are millions of moral and spiritual cowards who are not brave enough to follow their convictions. The "unbelieving", who think skepticism and doubting an evidence of scholarship and independent thinking, will not be there. They require perfect proof in religious matters and accept without question the theories and speculations of "science falsely so-called". There will be a large class in this group who will find themselves outside the kingdom. Unbelief is one of the greatest sins of the last days and is sweeping the world to destruction. "Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth, will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith."--S.C. 105.

Other Groups. "The abominable" are the hateful, foul, and loathsome. Those who have gone so deep in sin that they are odious to God and the righteous. They think and do and talk evil until they are filthy. They cannot be taken into the kingdom. If "murderers" include all who "hate" and become "angry without a cause", there will be a large class in this group who are outside the city and kingdom. See Matt. 5:21,22; 1 John 3:15. The "whoremongers" take in the large class guilty of immorality; those who are controlled by the lusts of the flesh. For them there is no room in the kingdom of heaven. The "sorcerers" include the large class who are deceived by spiritism or the spirits of devils. The "idolaters" are those who adore, or serve, or worship, the creature more than the Creator. "Dogs" represent the unconverted or the uncircumcised in heart. The Jews called all who were uncircumcised, dogs. "Who is a dog? He who is not circumcised."--Pirkey Elieser, Chap. 29. All of these classes suffer the second death in the lake of fire.

No More Curse. Rev. 22:3-5. The earth was cursed for man's sake after the fall and that curse has never been removed. Also for 6000 years the earth has been under the withering curse of sin. Places and countries that were once the gardens of the world are now barren deserts. Palestine was once the "land flowing with milk and honey" and was capable of supporting a nation of millions of people. Their wealth was so great that they loaned to the other nations and never borrowed. Under the curse of sin it has become a country so desolate that it can only meagerly support a few hundred thousand. "This beautiful country has now become sad and gloomy through the ever-impoverishing influence of Islamism."--"Life of Jesus", Renan, pp. 114,115. But the curse will be removed and again the earth will yield its hundred-fold. No longer will man have to make his living "by the sweat of his face".

Paradise Restored. "Think, then, what its regeneration must bring!--an earth which no longer smarts and smokes under the curse of sin,--an earth which needs no more to be torn with hooks and irons to make it yield its fruits,--an earth where thornes and thistles no longer infest the ground, nor serpents hiss among the flowers, nor savage beasts lay in ambush to devour,--an earth whose sod is never cut with graves, whose soil is never moistened with tears or saturated with human blood, whose fields are never blasted with unpropitious seasons, whose atmosphere never gives wings to the seeds of plague and death, whose ways are never lined with funeral processions, or blocked up with armed men on their way to war,--an earth whose hills ever flow with salvation, and whose valleys know only the sweetness of Jehovah's smiles,--an earth from end to end, and from center to utmost verge, clothed with the eternal blessedness of Paradise Restored."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 380.

"In the final restitution, when there shall be a 'new heavens and a new earth', it is to be restored more gloriously adorned than at the beginning."--P.P. 62.

Memory Text: Rev. 21:4.

THE DRAMA ENDED

66

The Last Act. Rev. 21:6. "All is over."--Moffatt. This is the fourth and last time this decree goes forth. The first was when Jesus died on the cross of Calvary and the plan of redemption was finished. The second is when probation closes and the work of salvation is finished. The third is when the seventh plague is poured out in which is "filled up" or "finished" the wrath of God. The fourth and last, "It is done", goes forth when every trace of sin is removed and the earth is restored to its original perfection. For seven millenniums this earth had been "a theatre to the world, to angels and to men." A series of terrible scenes had passed before the Seer of Patmos in the great prophetic drama of the Apocalypse, picturing the defeats and triumphs of the church militant. The changing scenes are now over and the curtain rises on one of eternal victory and triumphant gladness that will never end.

The Controversy Ended. At last the long struggle over the dominion of the world and its inhabitants is over, the revolt of Satan has completely collapsed, and he and his rebel hosts are no more. "The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, through the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love."--G.C. 678.

The Consummation. "Genesis is the book of beginnings; the Revelation is the book of endings of what was then begun; and the last laps back again upon the first, and welds the two ends of the history into the golden ring of eternity. There was a time of innocence, and then came a long and dreary time of the absence of innocence; and here we are shown the time of innocence returned, to depart no more. Nor is it without the most cheering significance, that in the account of the final consummation we again come upon a group of objects answering to the most conspicuous and fondly remembered in all the bright story of the original opening of the world."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 422.

The World of Destiny. No other world in the universe has had such an eventful career of so vast importance to the kingdom of God as this little world of destiny. "Our little world is the lesson-book of the universe."--D.A. 19. Here was fought out and eternally decided what principles should forever rule in the government of all the worlds. "A wonderful world is this! True, it is but a spark amidst the suns of the universe, a tiny leaf in the mighty forest! Let the light be quenched and the leaf be destroyed, their absence would not be felt. Still it has a moral history the most momentous. Here Christ lived, labored, died. Here millions have been trained for heaven. What Marathon was to Greece, and Waterloo to Europe, this little earth is to the creation. Here the great battles of the spiritual universe are fought. It is the Thermopylae of the Creation."--Rev. Thomas, in "Pulpit Commentary".

The River of Life. Rev. 22:1,2. The throne of God is in the temple on Mount Zion which is outside the city. The river of life has its origin in Mount Zion beneath the throne "of God and of the Lamb". Its crystal clear waters flow through the city in the middle of the main street. "In the middle of the street of the city."--20th C.N.T. "In the midst of the broad place."--Emphatic Diaglott. One of the most precious and gladdening scenes to the inhabitants of the dry and thirsty East is a living stream of pure water. In the original Paradise a river had its origin in the Garden of Eden and divided into four divisions. Gen. 2:10. The restored Paradise will not be complete without the restoration of the river, which will be just as literal as the former.

Clear as Crystal. The waters of this river are not muddy as are so many of those of the East. The water is pure, clear, and sparkling, It seems that this river will have many streams of branches which reach and water all parts of the city to reflesh and make glad its inhabitants. See Psalms 46:4. It may be that there will be four streams flowing out in four directions as was true of the river and streams of the original Paradise. The crystal clearness of the water will make clearly visible the glittering, precious stones and golden sands of the river bed. The glorious lights of these reflected through the clear water will produce a scene of indescribable beauty. Beside it an electric fountain with its many colors sinks into insignificance.

Symbol of Gospel. This literal river that waters Paradise is a beautiful symbol of the gospel of salvation that sends its refleshing streams of the water of life throughout this desert and dready land. This is the "living water" mentioned by Jesus in His conversation with the woman at the well of Samaria. John 4:10-14. This water quenches the thirst of the weary pilgrims of earth with a satisfaction the world cannot know. John 6:35; Matt. 5:6. "Completely satisfied."--Wey. "When the Holy Spirit controls the minds of our church members" they "will be refreshed by the water of life."--Vol. 8:211. "Medical missionary work and the gospel ministry are the channels through which God seeks to pour a constant supply of His goodness. They are to be as a river of life for the irrigation of His church."--"Bible Echo", Aug. 12:1901. Quoted in "Christian Service", p. 133, 134.

The Tree of Life. "On both sides of the river."-Douay. According to Eze. 47:12 this tree seems to be a species fringing both sides of the river. The original Paradise had this tree in "the midst of the garden". Gen. 2:9; 3:24. "On either side of the river, midway between it and the main street of the city, was the tree of life."--Wey. This tree produces its fruit twelve times as often as other trees and is always seasonable with an abundant supply. Trees add much to the beauty of a city and the pleasure of its inhabitants. The hanging gardens of Babylon was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Some of the trees grew to be 12 feet in circumference. Some of the trees of the original paradise are named and described in Eze. 31:3-9.

The Life Giver. The tree of life was so called because its fruit was the only kind that contained all the elements necessary to perpetuate life. "In the garden were trees of every variety, many of them laden with fragrant and delicious fruit. There were lovely vines, growing upright, yet presenting a most graceful appearance, with their branches drooping under their load of tempting fruit, of the richest and most varied hues....There were fragrant flowers of every hue in rich profesion. In the midst of the garden stood the tree of life, surpassing in glory all other trees. Its fruit appeared like apples of gold and silver, and had the power to perpetuate life."--P.P. 47. "The fruit of the tree of life in the garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death."--Vol. 8:288.

Symbol of Christ. To fallen men Christ is the tree of life and there is no hope of life except through him. 1 John 5:11,12; John 6:51-63. "After the entrance of sin the heavenly Husbandman transplanted the tree of life to the Paradise above; but its branches hang over the wall to the lower world. Through the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ, we may still eat of its life-giving fruit."--Id. 288. The Fruits of the Spirit might be enumerated as the 12 spiritual fruits of the tree of life: Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, righteousness, truth, and obedience. Gal. 5:22,23; Eph. 5:9; Rom. 8:4,7.

Leaves of Tree. "Served as medicine for the nations."--Wey. It seems from this statement that the leaves as well as the fruit have life-giving qualities. It may be that the leaves will play an important part in correcting the physical deformities caused by sin and cause the redeemed "to grow up as calves of the stall." Mal. 4:2. In a symbolic sense the leaves represent the word and promises of God. "Then grasp His promises as leaves from the tree of life."--M.H. 66. "So with the promises of God.... They are leaves from that tree which is 'for the healing of the nations', Received, assimilated, they are to be the strength of character, the inspiration and the sustenance of life. Nothing else can have such healing power. Nothing else can impart the courage and faith, which give vital energy to the whole being."--Id. 122. "Open the Bible before the tempted, struggling one, and over and over again read to him the promises of God. These promises will be to him as leaves of the tree of life."--Id. 173. "His Word, the leaves of the tree of life."--Id. 199. See also Vol. 7:195; Vol. 6:393; Vol. 8:33.

The Epilogue. Rev. 22:6-21 constitutes the epilogue of the book of Revelation, or the "closing remarks". In verses 6-12 Jesus assures the prophet that the Apocalypse is dependable and true, and that its sayings should not be sealed "for the time is at hand". He also pronounces a final blessing upon all who study and keep "the sayings of the prophecy of this book". He several times repeats the promise that He is coming quickly to give rewards to both the righteous and the wicked, and that that event will close the probation and settle the destiny of all.

The Last Invitation. v. 16, 17. The entire book is the testimony of Jesus to the seven churches. He announces Himself as the rightful heir to the throne of David which He is soon to occupy, because He is the "bright and morning star" that was to arise out of Jacob to wield the sceptre of Israel in fulfillment of the prophecy of Balaam recorded in Num. 24:17-19. This is Christ's final invitation for all who will to enter the kingdom; to attend the marriage and marriage supper of the Lamb; to occupy the mansions of the celestial city. Acceptance of the invitation is urged by the pleadings of His representative, the Holy Spirit. The church or Bride of Christ passes on the invitation to others. To her has been given the great gospel commission which is finished in the three-fold message during the latter rain. All who truly hear and accept the invitation will pass it on to others that they may share its blessings. All who are thirsty for the water of life are urged to come and partake "freely" or "without money and without price".

Christ's Last Testimony. v. 18,19. See Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5,6. This threatened curse emphasizes the importance of the book. "In the estimate of God, he who adds to or takes from what it presents...inflicts an injury so great that he who does it need never hope for salvation. How important, therefore, how precious in the eye of heaven, how necessary to the right instruction of God's people, how vital to the proper Christian faith and hope are the unmutilated and unchanged foreshowings which this book was given to set forth."--"The Apocalypse", Seiss, Vol. 3, p. 485. Since the plagues fall on those who reject the third angel's message and they also are refused entrance into the city, such rejection adds to and takes from the Revelation.

John's Appendage. v. 20. Two times in the epilogue Jesus had repeated the promise, "Behold, I come quickly." After reiterating this promise the prophet shouts an approving "Amen", and then adds, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." This should be the response of every student of this book who truly loves Him. It is said by all who intelligently pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven." This prayer will be fully answered when the King comes with His kingdom of glory. That event has been the hope of God's people in all ages and for it all creation has long been waiting and longing. Rom. 8:18-23.Wey.

Apostolic Benediction. v. 21. "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints."--Eng. R.V. This would indicate that the Revelation is of universal application and includes all to the end of time. "Grace" is the unmerited favor of God. Practically all of the epistles of the New Testament begin and end with such a benediction of grace to the believer. Salvation is not granted on the basis of human works and human merit but is the gift of God received by faith. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."-Eph. 2:8. For this reason the redeemed will ascribe to God and the Lamb all honor and praise and glory for their own redemption and for the restoration of their lost home.

Perfection Returns. Isa. 60:18-22. "But when the perfect state of things is come, all that is imperfect will be brought to an end."--1 Cor. 13:10. Wey. A perfect state of things existed in the Paradise that was lost, and this perfect state will come back again when Paradise is restored. "There are ever flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God's people, so long pilgrims and wanderers find a home."--G.C. 675.

Endless Development. "Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body. All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of the redeemed....With undimmed vision they will gaze upon the glory of creation,--suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity."--Id. 677.

Memory Text: Rev. 22:17.